

The Importance of Being Rhythmic

—
Jo Pennington



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A SIMPLE DESIGN IN BALANCED GROUPING.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING RHYTHMIC

A STUDY OF THE PRINCIPLES OF DALCROZE
EURYTHMICS APPLIED TO GENERAL EDUCA-
TION AND TO THE ARTS OF MUSIC, DANCING
AND ACTING. BASED ON AND ADAPTED
FROM "RHYTHM, MUSIC AND EDUCATION,"
BY ÉMILE JAQUES-DALCROZE

BY

JO PENNINGTON

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
WALTER DAMROSCH

DRAWINGS BY THE LATE PAUL THEVENAZ
PHOTOGRAPHS BY EDWIN F. TOWNSEND, NEW YORK

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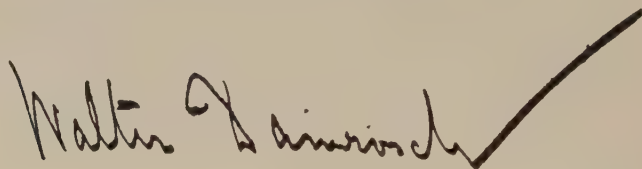


Made in the United States of America

INTRODUCTION

THIS book contains the best, the clearest exposition of the remarkable theories of Jaques Dalcroze which I have yet seen. If his teachings were accepted and taught to the children of the entire world, it would effect a revolution, and a finer, a nobler race would be the result. Dalcroze himself is an excellent musician who perceived the intimate relations existing between music and bodily movement. Others before him, notably the great Froebel, had already taken cognizance of this, but Dalcroze, from the musician's standpoint, has developed the idea into a great and complete science. It is a revelation to see his pupils express music (and themselves) in rhythmic pantomime. The effect on executors and auditors is compelling, and makes us feel with renewed conviction the Greek axiom, that music and bodily movement are one and inseparable. I should like to see an enthusiastic teacher of the Dalcroze method placed in every public school of our country. It would let daylight into many

a dark torture chamber of the ordinary teaching of music, which consists mainly in the practicing of dreary scales and the exclusion of anything like feeling.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Walter G. Samarin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end that extends upwards and to the right.

NEW YORK,
October, 1924.

FOREWORD

IN his foreword to "Rhythm, Music and Education" published in 1921, M. Jaques-Dalcroze says: "In chronological order, these chapters record my ideas as developed from 1897 to the present day in lectures and articles. . . . It seems to me that this series of transformations and developments out of an original general principle may be of interest to pedagogues and psychologists; that is why I discarded my original intention of recasting all the articles according to a definite plan and on a principle of unity."

The present volume is an attempt to follow this original plan of M. Jaques-Dalcroze; to recast the articles according to a definite plan and at the same time to reduce the original book to a brief readable form. In other words, "Rhythm, Music and Education" was addressed to pedagogues and psychologists; the present book is addressed to the general public and answers the question: "What is the system known as Dalcroze Eurythmics?"

So much has been omitted from the original book that teachers, educators, psychologists, musicians and artists in all fields will find in it a mine of material and a wealth of detail concerning the relation of rhythm, art and education. The elaboration of all of M. Jaques-Dalcroze's theories on musical education in schools and conservatories; the technical (from a musical point of view) explanation of his method both as a means of general education and of musical training; the physical, aural and mental significance of rhythm; the relation of rhythmic training to the art of the musician; the importance of rhythm in creative imagination; the identity of the rhythmic elements in music and in movement—all these have been omitted. In short the present volume sets forth the theories of M. Jaques-Dalcroze in a *general* way while the original book gives their definite and *specific* application.

It only remains to explain that Chapters III, IV, V, and VII are taken wholly from "Rhythm, Music and Education." Chapters I and II and the first part of Chapter VI were prepared by the editor of the present volume.

In Chapter VI will be found some comments on The Singer. This part of the Chapter (part three) has been included under the heading of "Eurythmics and the Actor" because in it are discussed only those phases of the singer's art which have to do with his emotional expres-

sion in movement and gesture; in other words it deals with the singer as actor.

In England Eurythmics is spelled "*Eurhythmics*"; but since Webster's International Dictionary gives authority for Eurythmy (without the "h") it seems best to adopt the simpler spelling in this book.

M. Jaques-Dalcroze wishes to announce that he will spend the school year 1924-5 in Paris for the purpose of organising complete training courses for teachers of his method of Eurythmics, and special classes for artists (music, the stage, dance). He will continue to inspect the Institut Jaques-Dalcroze in Geneva, Switzerland, and the London School of Dalcroze Eurythmics. The school year begins on October 1, 1925. Inquiries should be addressed to the École de Rhythmique Jaques-Dalcroze, 52 Rue de Vaugirard, Paris. He will also hold a summer school in Paris from August 4th to 16th inclusive.

J. P.

NEW YORK, September, 1924.

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The Importance of Being Rhythmic

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CHAPTER I

DEFINITIONS OF EURYTHMICS

Education by and in rhythm

THE method of Eurythmics originated and developed by M. Émile Jaques-Dalcroze is an educational system which offers training in and by rhythm. Like the ancient Greeks, M. Jaques-Dalcroze arrived at the conclusion that the part played by music in the education of the child could not be too strongly emphasized. He says:¹ "Music, like gymnastics, is primarily not a branch of learning but a branch of education. In the Greek sense of the word, music is the art in which temperament is

¹ M. Jaques-Dalcroze is quoted here because Chapters I and II and the first part of Chapter VI were written by the editor of this revision. See preface.

most concretely manifested. Education should have as its chief aim the liberation of the individual from resistances of every nature which hamper him in the expression of his character and should further enable him, in the most natural manner, to manifest his sensibility and temperament. If we postponed the study of Roman history till we had reached twenty, our general development would not be affected. But to commence our gymnastic exercises and the study of music at an adult age would be to lose most of the benefits they should provide. Gymnastics means health; music means harmony and joy."

First discoveries of M. Jaques-Dalcroze

The whole method was the outgrowth of M. Jaques-Dalcroze's experience with his music pupils, for he was a teacher of harmony in the Conservatoire at Geneva, Switzerland, at the time of his first discoveries and researches. In his attempts to find out what was wrong with his pupils and with methods of music-teaching then in vogue; why the acquisition of a piano technique was in no way related to the development of a genuine musical feeling; in his efforts to correct the shortcomings of his students, he stumbled upon this important fact: That the basis of this lack in them was at the root of their general disabilities in other directions. A pupil who, in spite of average or more than average musical abilities and in

spite of years of training, was in some way prevented from expressing himself in his playing, found the same obstacles in his path to any other achievement. Just how M. Jaques-Dalcroze conducted his experiments during the next twenty-five years is too long a story to be told here. Suffice it to say that before many years he decided that the solution of his own problem and the problem of education in general lay in training in rhythm and by rhythm, for only in that way could the child's powers—mental, physical and emotional—be liberated and harmonized.

The purpose of this book

If these definitions of eurythmics seem too general, the reader is reminded that this whole volume is an attempt to define it—first as a method of general education for children (both in assisting in their mental development and in their musical training); and in the last three chapters the particular application of eurythmics to the arts of music, dancing and the drama.

Rhythm and meter

Before attempting to give a specific definition of eurythmics, it must be made clear just what is meant by rhythm. No one has ever succeeded in defining it completely and satisfactorily though scientists spend much time in the vain attempt. It is the vital principle governing the

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action of the solar system; all life upon the earth and all the functions of the human body. The important thing is to remember the distinction between rhythm and meter—two words hopelessly confused in the average mind. They do not by any means have the same meaning though meter is part of rhythm. Meter is the measurement of regular intervals of time; rhythm deals with unequal intervals. In the divisions of our calendar, for instance, we find this inequality so that every fourth or leap year we have one extra day. The action of the heart can be continued throughout our lives only because the interval of rest is longer than the period of activity.¹ Rhythm may be defined as symmetry of movement and accent, whereas meter is measurement of movement and accent. Although the words may be synonymous, they are not identical since rhythm means so much more than meter.²

Eurythmics gives experience rather than knowledge

It was this vital impulse which M. Jaques-Dalcroze found wanting in his pupils. A feeling for, an understanding of, rhythm, would have helped them to their goal of musicianship, whereas the lack of it left them where the average musical training leaves most students: Mere pianists, technicians, unmoved by the emotions

¹ See note, Chapter VII, page 133. This law is also one of the laws of musical composition.

² See Chapter IV, page 69, meter and rhythm in art.

which inspired the composer and therefore unable to express them. And so he began to experiment with exercises for developing the instinctive sense of rhythm which heredity, environment and maladjustment had buried or restrained. As we have said, he soon found that this lack of rhythm accounted not only for the deficiencies of his pupils as musicians, but for their deficiencies in their other undertakings—in general scholarship, in physical and mental poise, in their relations with their fellow-beings, in their work and even in their play. So the scope of the exercises was broadened and gradually his system of education by rhythm and in rhythm was developed. According to its originator, eurythmics has this aim: To enable pupils to say, not “I know” but “I have experienced” and so create in them the desire to express themselves; for the deep impression of an emotion inspires a longing to communicate it to others. Another educator¹ summarizes his statements comparing eurythmics and the Greek theories of education in this way: “Less lost motion, more enjoyment; this is the simple and practicable precept of an æsthetic method of education.”

Webster's definition of eurythmy

It will surprise many persons who believe eurythmics is a “made-up” word to know that it is in the dictionary—

¹ Robert Morris Ogden in the *Sewanee Review*.

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at least the noun from which it is derived, eurythmy. In Webster's International Dictionary, eurythmy is defined in this way: "(Fine arts) Just or harmonious proportion or movement, as in the composition of a poem, an edifice, a painting or a statue; (medical) regularity of the pulse." The prefix *eu* comes from a Greek adjective meaning good. *Rhythmy* means rhythm, measure, proportion, symmetry. Eurythmics is simply an education of the human organism—nerves, muscles, brain, sensibilities—aiming at its harmonious proportion and movement.

Eurythmics is Use of Body as a Musical Instrument

An English educator¹ has defined eurythmics as training in the use of the body as a musical instrument. He says:

"If this seems an odd statement, it is only because we conceive of music in too narrow a sense, as if music were wholly an affair of sound. What music is in essence we do not know; no definition can cover what it means in our inner experience. It is at any rate *in us*, not in the violin or the voice, not in written score or the conductor's hand. It is time and rhythm and sound, and it is more than all of these. Hands and feet, keyboard and strings, notation and letters, are all alike instruments by which the soul of music can reach our souls."

¹ J. J. Findlay, professor of education at the University of Manchester, England.

Rhythm Must be Taught Through Music

Education by and in rhythm employs music as intermediary for two reasons: (1) Music is made up of rhythm and sound. Sound appeals to the ear; rhythm to the entire organism. (2) Music is the art by which temperament can be most easily released, by which the self or ego of the individual can find most complete and adequate expression.

What Music Is

To the average adult, the word music calls up certain definite but unalluring images: Jazz, the church choir, the playing or singing of a friend's daughter to which one must politely listen. To the average child it is a more active torment. It is the daily hour at the piano with feet that will not quite reach the pedal, hands that will not quite stretch an octave, eyes that cannot quite make out the notes on the page, and ears that are too naïve to appreciate the harmonies which the fingers haltingly produce. What has all this to do with music? Absolutely nothing with the kind of music to which this book refers. In his "Laws," Plato says: "Education has two branches, one of gymnastics which is concerned with the body and the other of music which is designed for the improvement of the soul." In these days it is considered slightly indelicate to speak of the soul, so let us say: Music is designed for the improvement of the character, temperament, ego,

personality—what you please. But when we say education by music, it is music we mean, not noise, not piano technique, not the mere shattering of silence with trained fingers; we mean that music which is in us and which can be expressed in any of the various languages of our being—in movement, in sound, in thought, in feeling, in creation.

Response to Rhythm

To go back a little, M. Jaques-Dalcroze discovered that so long as his pupils could take music in only through the ears and give it out only through their fingers, they would never be musicians. The whole being must respond—muscles, nerves, sensibilities. And so his system of eurythmics is devised to train all of the faculties in rhythm. “We have all of us muscles, reason and volition, consequently we are all equal before rhythm.”

The Education of Tomorrow

“The idea underlying the conception and construction of my whole system,” explains M. Jaques-Dalcroze,¹ “is that the education of tomorrow must, before all else, teach children to know themselves; to measure their intellectual and physical capacities by judicious comparison with the efforts of their predecessors and to submit them to exercises enabling them to utilize their powers, to obtain due balance and thereby adapt them-

¹ See note p. I.

selves to the necessities of their individual and collective existence. It is not enough to give children and young people a general tuition founded exclusively on the knowledge of our forebears' activities. Teachers should aim to furnish them with the means both of living their own lives and of harmonizing them with the lives of others. The education of tomorrow must embrace reconstruction, preparation and adaptation. It must aim on the one hand at the re-education of the nervous faculties and the attainment of mental poise and concentration; on the other hand at the equipment for whatever enterprise practical necessity may dictate, and at the power to react without effort. In short, it must aim at the provision of a maximum force with a minimum of strain and resistance.

Education Should Develop the Personality

“More than ever in these times of social reconstruction, the human race demands the re-education of the individual. There has been endless discussion as to the inevitable effects on the social and artistic atmosphere of the future of the present unsettled state, in which it is impossible to look ahead and prescribe the necessary measures for safeguarding our civilization and our culture. In my judgment, all our efforts should be directed to training our children to become conscious of their personalities, to develop their temperaments and to liberate their particular rhythms of individual life from every trammel-

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ing influence. More than ever they should be enlightened as to the relations existing between soul and mind, between the conscious and the subconscious; between imagination and the processes of action. Thoughts should be brought into immediate contact with behavior. The new education should aim at regulating the interaction between our nervous and our intellectual forces."

The Object of Rhythmic Training

It is impossible in this abridged volume (or in any volume for that matter) to explain even a small part of the exercises in eurythmics. But it is possible to summarize their purpose. Eurythmics aims first of all to give the child control over his muscles, nerves, will, sensibility and emotion; to teach him the fundamentals of music; to coordinate the impulses of mind and body; to permit the free expression of his temperament; to awake in him the creative impulse; and to bring him into harmony with his fellow beings by first bringing him into harmony with himself. Rhythm is the door through which the child of the future may enter into complete possession of his spiritual inheritance.

The Three Branches of Eurythmics

Eurythmics is made up of three branches: Rhythmic movement, solfege (including ear-training) and pianoforte improvisation. The first branch of the method is the one with which children and adults alike must begin. The

two other branches are for those who wish to study music (either professionally or as music lovers merely) and for those who wish themselves to become teachers of eurythmics. The three branches overlap in many ways; for instance, lessons in rhythmic movement also include many exercises which develop the ear; and since from the beginning the pupil is taught to improvise rhythms, much preliminary work in this field has been done before he actually experiments with the piano. Training in rhythmic movement should begin in infancy, for the rhythmic impulse is the earliest impulse of the child,¹ and it should continue at least through the entire period of the child's education. The prospective student of music should begin his study of solfege only after a year's training in rhythmic movement. As he becomes increasingly aware of the close relations existing between movement, melody and harmony, he will become ready for the study of improvisation: that is, rapid and spontaneous instrumental composition. In this third branch of the method he will find again a combination of the principles laid down in rhythmic movement and in solfege, but he will have to acquire the special technique necessary for the mastery of his instrument.² The average student, however, confines himself to the study of rhythmic movement unless,

¹ See note Chapter IV, page 65.

² A more detailed description of these three branches of eurythmics will be found in Chapter VII, pages 128, 129 and 130.

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as has been said, he is studying music professionally or wishes to become a teacher of eurythmics.

Exercises in Rhythmic Movement

In order that the reader may have some definite idea of the nature of the exercises in rhythmic movement, we shall describe those listed in the following program. This program is selected because it was given at a public demonstration lesson of eurythmics and because it gives representative exercises. These exercises are merely a sample—just such an introduction to an understanding of the Dalcroze method as an understanding of the alphabet is an introduction to the English language. They are described here merely to give a definite focus to the general principles set forth in the early part of this chapter; to show how those principles have been framed in the form of exercises.

A Representative Program

PROGRAM OF A DEMONSTRATION LESSON IN DALCROZE EURYTHMICS

1. General response to music; expressing tempo and tone quality.
2. Exercises of attention and inhibition.
 - a. Marching, at command "hopp" one step backward.
 - b. Silent counting.

3. Arm movements to indicate measure.
From 2 to 12 beats in a measure.
4. Note values.
 - a. Quarter notes to quintuplets.
 - b. Whole notes up to 8 beats.
 - c. Syncopations.
5. Conducting; changes of measure, pathetic accent, *accelerando*, *ritardando*.
6. Phrasing.
7. "Realization" of rhythms.
8. "Realization" in canon, the pupils one measure after the piano.
9. Independence of control.
10. Rhythmic Counterpoint; theme by piano, counterpoint (the unplayed note values) realized by pupils in quarter notes, eighth notes and triplets.

NOTE: The music for all of the exercises is improvised. The word "hopp" is used as a signal to the pupils to make some change in the exercise as previously directed.

In this program, the word "realize" is used in the sense of expressing rhythms by movements of the body.

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Exercise 1. Following the Music, Expressing Tempo and Tone Quality

The teacher at the piano improvises music to which the pupils march (usually in a circle) beating the time with



This and the illustration on the next page are two different representations of a crescendo; Exercise I in demonstration program—Following the music.

their arms ($3/4$, $5/8$, $12/8$, etc.) as an orchestra leader conducts, and stepping with their feet the note values (that is, quarter notes are indicated by normal steps, eighth notes by running steps, half notes by a step and a bend of the leg, a dotted eighth and a sixteenth by a skip, etc.). The teacher varies the expression of the playing,



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now increasing or decreasing the intensity of tone, now playing more slowly or more quickly; and the pupils "follow the music" literally, reproducing in their movements the exact pattern and structure of her improvisation.

Exercise 2. Attention and Inhibition

These two exercises of attention and inhibition are exercises in mental control, concentration and coordination of mind and body. In (a) the pupils march to the music and at "hopp" take one step backward. As this word comes at quite irregular intervals and they have no warning of it, they must listen carefully and be ready to respond, both mentally and muscularly, the moment they hear the command. In (b) the pupils march to the music and at a signal stop and count silently the two, three, four or more beats agreed upon and then take up their march exactly on time. This is an exercise in silent counting, demanding concentration and a consciousness of the beat in the muscles as well as in the brain—a kind of training in muscular memory. It is amusing to note how unfailingly beginners take up the marching too soon, seldom too late. The tendency of the untrained mind is to quicken the beat while the music is silent because the mind operates consciously whereas the muscles should record and retain the impression without conscious effort.

Exercise 3. Arm Movements to Indicate Measure

As explained in the first exercise, the movements of the arm indicate the measure of the music. They are modeled on those of the orchestra conductor. In two-four time the arms move down for the metric accent and then up for the second beat; in three-four they move down, sideways and then up; in four-four time, they move down, crossed in front of the body, sideways and then up, etc.¹

Exercise 4. Note Values. Syncopation

In the exercise to demonstrate note values, the pupils march one step for each beat while the teacher plays quarter notes; two for each beat in eighth notes; three for triplets, etc. The values of whole and half notes are also represented, the half note by a step and a bend, and the whole note by a step followed by three or more movements of the leg without stepping. Exercises in syncopation require more training. The teacher plays an even tempo—say quarter notes in four-four time. The pupils at a command walk in syncopation for one measure or more—stepping either just before or just after the beat, according as the syncopation is by anticipating the beat or retarding it. As their *feet* take steps just *off the beat*, their *arms* must continue to beat the time regularly, each movement being made *on the beat*. This exercise then is one in concentration, mental and

¹See illustration, p. 44.

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physical control (coordination) and in the understanding of the musical principles of polyrhythm and syncopation.

Exercise 5. Conducting

In the exercise in conducting, one pupil takes his place before the others and conducts them just as the leader of an orchestra conducts, indicating the tempo the pupils



Pathetic accent; one phase of Exercise V, Conducting.

are to take in their marching, directing crescendo and diminuendo at will, quicker and slower speeds, heaviness or lightness of feeling to be expressed in their movements, accents to be made (other than the metric accent on the first beat of each measure which is always indicated by a



Direction of groups; another form of Exercise V, Conducting.

stamp of the foot). These accents on beats other than the first are pathetic accents. This exercise is first of all an exercise in self-control and spontaneous improvisation in rhythmic movement on the part of the "conductor"; on the part of the pupils it is the same as the first exercise of this program.

Exercise 6. Phrasing

Everyone knows that music, like speech, is broken up into phrases. A singer pauses to take a fresh breath at the

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beginning of a new phrase. In movement a new phrase may be indicated in several ways: such as a change of direction of the march on the part of the whole group, or by a change from one arm to another on the part of the individual. This is an exercise in ear-training, in attention and in the creation of new ways of expressing the beginning of a phrase, that is, improvisation.

Exercise 7. "Realization" of Rhythms

As explained in the program, to "realize" in the Dalcroze sense means to express in bodily movements all the elements of the music save sound. In this exercise the teacher plays a series of measures and the pupils, after listening to them, realize in their movements the rhythm which they have heard—expressing the note values, the meter, the shading, the quickness or slowness—they reproduce the rhythm in movement as definitely as though it were written in ordinary musical notation. In fact that is usually the next step in the exercise. This exercise combines several important elements of Dalcroze Eurythmics: ear training; the musical analysis of rhythm; memory and concentration; and the physical response necessary to the execution of the rhythm in movement.

Exercise 8. Exercise in Canon

The teacher improvises measures in a given meter and the pupils realize the rhythm of each measure just after

its execution by the teacher; that is, in canon. This exercise combines the principles of exercises 1, 2, 3, 4 and 7 and adds to it the close concentration required to listen to one measure while executing the preceding one. Everyone knows those old songs, "Scotland's Burning" and "Three Blind Mice" in which one singer begins and sings one phrase; the second singer begins later and so on. This exercise follows the same musical principle. No pupil of eurythmics will ever quail before the legendary terrors of a "Bach Fugue" who has arrived at an understanding of the principle of canon for that is the basis of the composition of a fugue.

Exercise 9. Independence of Control

This exercise is one in polyrhythm, the pupil expressing several rhythms at the same time. He may perhaps beat three-four time with the left arm and four-four with the right at the same time walking twelve-eight with the feet. There are many variations of this though in the beginning pupils find it sufficiently difficult to beat two with one arm and three with the other, especially since each arm must "remember," so to speak, the accent which falls on the first beat of its own measure. Another form of this exercise is to have the pupils march one measure while beating time for another; as three with the arms and four with the feet. These are worked out mathematically at first but soon the pupils learn to keep in their muscular



Independence of Control. Exercise IX. Each arm follows its own series of gestures.

and mental consciousnesses the pulse of the two rhythms simultaneously.

Exercise 10. Rhythmic Counterpoint

Rhythmic counterpoint is an exercise in the appreciation of unplayed beats. The teacher improvises a short theme, let us say simply two half notes and a quarter in five-four time:

Theme $\frac{5}{4} = | \text{half} \quad \text{half} \quad \text{quarter} |$

The pupil, instead of stepping on the first, third and fifth beats of the measure, will do the counterpoint by stepping on the *second* and *fourth*:

Counterpoint $| \text{quarter} \quad \text{half} \quad \text{quarter} \quad \text{half} \quad \text{quarter} |$

Or, if told to do the counterpoint in eight notes, he will fill in every unplayed eighth note beat, *i. e.*

$| \text{quarter} \quad \text{eighth} \quad \text{eighth} \quad \text{quarter} \quad \text{eighth} \quad \text{eighth} \quad \text{quarter} \quad \text{eighth} \quad \text{eighth} \quad \text{quarter} |$

This is an exercise in inhibition and in the accurate analysis of time values.

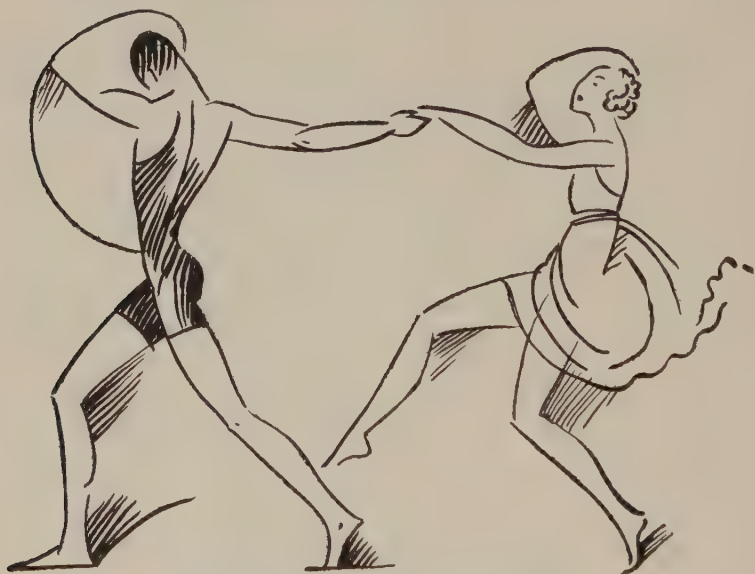
A more complicated form of exercise is the realization of theme and counterpoint simultaneously. For example, the pupils may learn a simple melody for a theme and then proceed to sing this melody while executing a rhythmic counterpoint, as a sort of accompaniment, with steps, or with gestures, thus:

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Theme ♩ . ♩ | ♩ |

Counterpoint ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ | ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ |

This is a very interesting exercise to watch for first one hears the note played by the teacher and following it the steps taken by the pupils to fill in the measure, the whole making a sound pattern as well as a rhythmic pattern.



Rhythmic counterpoint. Exercise X.

Improvised Music

In following this sample lesson in eurythmics, the reader must remember that all the music is improvised. From

the very nature of the exercises it is impossible to use written music. M. Jaques-Dalcroze has composed, in addition to his Action Songs for children, music which may be used in plastic exercises and these are occasionally employed by the teacher; but for the most part the music must be created spontaneously. That is why the method in its complete form lays so much stress on ear-training and improvisation; and that is also why those who profess to be Dalcroze teachers after a few lessons in rhythmic movement can only offer the husk of this training. The whole kernel is lacking—the understanding of musical harmony, the ability to improvise rhythms illustrative of the various musical principles and laws, and worst lack of all the ability to *improvise exercises* by combining the elements of several already given.

Self-dependence and Un-self-consciousness

A study of these exercises will convince even the most skeptical that each pupil must think and move for himself. There is no time to copy another and usually there is not even the desire to do so. Each pupil becomes so deeply engrossed in the problem offered him—the control of muscles, nerves, will—that he has no time to watch his neighbor. Best of all he has no self-consciousness in the derived meaning of the word. One of the spectators of a demonstration who happened to be a choral conductor said: “The fault that we commit and the fault which I am

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quite sure this system is likely to eradicate is that we all think what other people are thinking of us when they look at us. That is a rotten thing to do. If you are immersed in your work you do not realize that anybody is watching you or that it matters if they are. Real enjoyment is absolute abandonment of self."

CHAPTER II

ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF THE DALCROZE METHOD

PART I. ITS BEGINNINGS AND PROGRESS IN EUROPE

Discoveries of a Swiss Music Teacher

TOWARDS the close of the last century, a Swiss professor of music found himself in a great deal of trouble because his theories were so far in advance of his time. He believed, for instance, that a child should be taught to listen to music before he should be taught to play it; that his ear should be trained before his fingers. He invented many exercises in support of this theory and of others which quickly followed upon the heels of his first discovery, all of them based upon his actual experiences as a teacher.¹ Finally his various experiments led to this important conclusion: That musical sensations of a rhythmic nature call for the muscular and nervous response of the *whole organism*. His experiments now took another turn.² Exercises had to be devised to bring about this complete response to music, not only through the ears

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and through the fingers, but through muscles, nerves and brain. In his innocence the conscientious professor assumed that all he must do now was to apply his theories in the classroom.

The "Instinctive" Musician

He was soon disillusioned. Fellow-musicians, fearful that the mystery of their craft was in danger (that it might be possible for almost anyone to become a musician!), assured the world that the little Swiss professor was wrong. The true musician, they said, should possess *instinctively* the necessary qualifications for the practice of his art and no amount of study could supply gifts that must come naturally or not at all; and the student of music should not be distracted from his finger exercises by any new theories. But the professor was not discouraged. Even at that early date he had faith in his visions and could write with unerring prophecy:¹ "I look forward to a system of musical education in which the body itself shall play the rôle of intermediary between sounds and thought, becoming in time the direct medium of our feelings . . . The child will be taught at school not only to sing, listen carefully and keep time but also to move and think accurately and rhythmically. One might commence by regulating the mechanism of walking, and from that proceed to ally vocal movements with the gestures

¹ See note page 1.

of the whole body. That would constitute at once *instruction in rhythm and education by rhythm.*"

A Prophecy Fulfilled

This was the hope and the prophecy uttered by Émile Jaques-Dalcroze, professor of harmony at the Conservatoire of Geneva, in the early days of his gropings and strivings—instruction in and education by rhythm. Glorious as the vision seemed to him at the time, the fulfillment has far outshone it in splendor. Today his Institut Jaques-Dalcroze at Geneva¹ is the mecca to which devout music students instinctively turn their steps. From it have gone forth teachers who carry his gospel into all parts of Europe and America. It has long outgrown the original conception of a series of exercises to be used in the teaching of music. It is now in the broadest sense a system of education by rhythm, a training of the individual that he may have the greatest possible control over his mind and body, and that he may most fittingly and with the least waste of effort express the temperament which distinguishes him from his fellow-beings.

The Progress of Eurythmics

Throughout twenty-five years of experiment and study, M. Jaques-Dalcroze has perfected his method, sent forth his teachers, founded schools, demonstrated the application of his principles to all related arts—dancing, singing,

¹ See Foreword page v.

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musical composition and interpretation, and acting. Because his method is still a living, growing thing, he has reserved to himself the right of examining all those who would teach it before he gives them permission to represent themselves as teachers of Dalcroze Eurythmics. In his book, "Rhythm, Music and Education" he has set forth in detail not only the principles and the actual exercises which make up his method, but the chronological record of his experiments, his discouragements, his strivings and his final success to serve as a guide and an encouragement to other teachers.

Its Growth in Europe

The story of the spread of Dalcroze Eurythmics abroad reads almost like a fairy tale. From the classroom of an obscure professor of music, this new education has spread to some fifty cities in Europe. In 1910 the brothers Wolf and Harold Dohrn invited M. Jaques-Dalcroze to go to Hellerau near Dresden where they built for him a kind of university of rhythm. To this spot pupils from all parts of the world came for instruction. But when the war broke out, M. Jaques-Dalcroze joined the intellectuals in Germany who protested against the government's military methods, and he was exiled from Germany and all his published books were destroyed. Undaunted, he went back to Geneva, the scene of his early struggles and continued his experiments and developed his theories,

traveling about with a little group of pupils to give demonstrations of his method and carefully noting his experiences that his principles should always be founded on living truth.

Eurythmics in France

Although there is a well-established school in Paris, the most interesting experiments there have been in connection with the theatre. The Theatre du Vieux Colombier, founded by Jacques Copeau, was one of the first and most successful of the so-called experimental theatres on the Continent. When M. Copeau brought his company to America, he included in it a Dalcroze teacher who was to direct the group-movement and pantomime of his productions.¹ This was the most definite and deliberate experiment made in direct connection with a theatre up to that time, apart from the festivals and other performances given by M. Jaques-Dalcroze himself in collaboration with Appia and Salzmann at Hellerau.² Of still greater importance was the introduction of a teacher of eurythmics into the training school of the Paris Opera, for it is in the presentation of lyric drama that the rhythmic principles can be most directly and satisfactorily applied. In 1922 two rhythmic ballets, arranged by the Dalcroze teacher, were presented with great success.

¹ Chapter VI, pages 101 and 102.

² Chapter VI, pages 121 and 122.

In England

Eurythmics has had a greater success in England, probably, than in any other country save Switzerland where it originated. There is a school in London which not only provides classes for children and adults, but offers normal courses. Once or twice a year M. Jaques-Dalcroze himself goes to London and, in accordance with his rule, personally examines those who would teach his method. Teachers who have received their training at the London school are to be found in over fifty towns of England, Scotland and Ireland and have, among them, about four thousand pupils. The method has been formally adopted in over eighty secondary schools and training colleges. In addition there is a Dalcroze Society of Great Britain and Ireland, for the purpose of "promoting in the British Empire the teaching of Eurythmics based on the principles of Jaques-Dalcroze." So thoroughly has the method taken root in London that a perfect epidemic of photographs of Dalcroze pupils raged for a time in the illustrated magazines and newspapers, and a popular novelist mentioned eurythmics as one of the many activities in which his heroine was engaged.

There are authorized Dalcroze teachers in the following British colonies: in Adelaide and Sydney, Australia; in New Zealand; and in Cape Town, Durban and Johannesburg, South Africa.

Eurythmics and the English Temperament

All of this is particularly interesting in view of the traditional English temperament—unemotional, reserved, shy and dreadfully afraid of “making itself ridiculous.”¹ In various speeches made by educators and musicians before the Dalcroze society, one finds many references to this national characteristic. One speaker, for instance, a prominent choral director says: “English people generally are rather against anything that may be called demonstrative. They think that to be really keen about a thing and to show it in their movements is rather indecent. People think it is not quite respectable to show that you are out to enjoy yourself. In music that is constantly the case. I have found over and over again one of the great difficulties was to destroy this sort of pseudo-respectability, the sort of stiffness of back and general disinclination to let yourself go. . . . I think the most valuable thing in the Dalcroze system is that children become perfectly natural.” That English educators realize the value of rhythmic training and appreciate especially the antidotal effects of such training upon the national tendency towards repression is attested by the fact that one of the officers of the Dalcroze Society of Great Britain and Ireland is the vice-chancellor of the University of Sheffield and another was formerly headmaster of Eton.

¹ See note Chapter IV, page 67.

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In Russia

The most amazing phase of the progress of the method in Europe, however, is the introduction of eurythmics into the department of education in Russia. In a letter written by one of M. Jaques-Dalcroze's pupils from Moscow in 1921 the story is graphically told. A rough translation of this letter, which appeared in French in "*Le Rythme*," the organ of the Institut Jaques-Dalcroze, follows: "Something startling has happened! The central government of Soviet Russia has a huge institution maintained entirely by the state, called the Institute of Rhythmic Education. It consists of a college with many big classrooms, a dormitory for pupils from the provinces and a beautiful garden. The aim of the Institute is to train teachers to teach the Dalcroze method and to introduce it as obligatory training in all the schools of the Republic. At this time we have two hundred and thirty adult pupils and one hundred and fifty children. We give lessons in more than seventy schools in Moscow, beginning with the kindergarten and ending with the big musical, theatrical and dancing schools. Our parent school is in Leningrad. Our latest news was the creation of a special section of Rhythmic in the department of public instruction. We have received an extraordinary communication, telling us that in the steppes of Oremburg there is a teacher who is doing wonderful things with the natives. One of your pupils is at Bakou, and others at Tiflis, at

Kiev, at Kharkoff. One of my pupils went to Odessa, another is in the Caucasus and others at Batoum, Woronage, Latvie, Riga and Libau. All the province wants to dance, and as the Central Government bans dancing, all dancing is called 'rhythmic gymnastic.' You can imagine the work imposed upon us to enlighten the province on the subject! Is it not wonderful, all that I am telling you, dear Monsieur Jaques? Although we are not communists, we, your pupils, have no little power. The reason is that your system is recognized as developing the social qualities so important in the new life that Russia is beginning to live."

PART 2. PROGRESS OF EURYTHMICS IN AMERICA

The Hardy Pioneers

It is quite probable that the first Dalcroze teachers who came to America felt that they were coming to give rhythmic training to the Red Men. At least, our cultural progress, if not our material progress, seemed to them to have advanced about that far. Of course at the time of their advent, America's musical taste was not a source of national pride. It speaks well, then, for the courage of these pioneers that they would leave the security and peace of their beloved school and cross the seas to carry the gospel of Eurythmics into America.

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Their Early Struggles

At first they secured the attention of only a few of the more advanced musicians. The greater part of the musical world here, as abroad, looked with suspicion upon anyone who threatened to reduce to simple terms the mystery of its craft. But gradually the earnestness of the teachers, their obvious faith in the principles they were teaching, won more and more attention. Once the difficulty of the name was overcome (the Greek prefix seemed to add special terrors to the whole method) educators and musicians sat up and rubbed their eyes and said: "Why, they are talking about rhythm." And before long everyone was talking about rhythm. Every dancer who took off her ballet shoes and danced barefooted said her dancing was "rhythmic"—though, unshod, she had no more control of her muscles than she had knowledge of the music she was "interpreting." Rhythm became a catchword, the more quickly since almost no one knew quite what it meant. Notwithstanding the usual facetious attitude of the public and the press, the classes in eurythmics grew; teachers of music, of physical education, of dancing and just ordinary teachers became interested; people flocked to the demonstrations—and the usual crop of imitators soon sprang up in New York and elsewhere.

Eurythmics in Private and Special Schools

Naturally the first persons to take up the new work were the private schools because they had the best oppor-

tunities for experiment. First in New York and Philadelphia and gradually in all parts of the country, eurythmics became a part of the curriculum in many private schools where it was sometimes substituted for regular gymnastic classes, for dancing lessons or for classwork in music. That it proved a success in this field is attested by the fact that it has remained on the list of studies in most of the schools where it was originally introduced.

The list of schools in which Dalcroze Eurythmics is taught (printed in the Appendix to this volume) gives some indication of the spread of the Dalcroze propaganda in this country. The theory of M. Jaques-Dalcroze that rhythmic training has a direct bearing upon general education, is being tested and approved by American educators.

Schools of music naturally find the application of Eurythmics most directly profitable since the method was originally an attempt on the part of a musician to find a system of training which would develop in the average individual the faculties which are natural to the born musician. In the year book of the Cleveland Institute of Music, Ernest Bloch, the composer, director of the Institute says:

"Our actions in life are born in the mind but manifest themselves through the body—through the voice, the hands, or through any physical action. An architect or a general conceives a plan in his mind but his plan has then

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to be carried out. Perfect accomplishment, not only in music but in any branch of human activity, exacts perfect control and coordination between the brain (which gives the commands) and the muscles (which execute them)."

Dancers and teachers of dancing (at least those who believe that dancing is an art, not merely an excuse for performing in public) welcome the opportunity of acquiring a new alphabet of movement based on the principles of music. Ruth St. Denis, in a letter to the Dalcroze school in New York, said: "Dalcroze is certainly one of the very few serious contributors to the progress of this age-old art of the dance."

Schools of the theatre find that their students achieve freedom of movement upon the stage far more readily if they are taught the infinite possibilities of expression through the medium of rhythm. In *The Theatre of Tomorrow*, Kenneth Macgowan says: "It seems to me that no actor can fail to profit by a knowledge of Dalcroze Eurythmics because he can learn through the study of musical rhythm the multiple possibilities of bodily rhythm; and through the study of dynamics, he can arrive at a proper 'timing' of dramatic action and speech."

Physical training teachers find a mass of new material in the exercises taught in classes of Eurythmics and learn to approach the problem of physical exercise without boredom from a new point of view. The introduction of *rhythm* into movement demands mental as well as physical

effort from the pupil and the result is the coordination of mind and body to the end of greater physical and mental poise.

The progress of Dalcroze propaganda in this country is greatly hampered by a lack of teachers. M. Jaques-Dalcroze will only issue a certificate authorizing a pupil to teach after he has himself tested the capacity of the would-be teacher; and since comparatively few of these authorized teachers have come to America (in 1924 there were eleven in the United States), the spread of the method here is necessarily slow.

In the Public Schools of New York

An interesting experiment was made by one of the music supervisors in the New York public schools who had herself been a Dalcroze pupil for several years. In the *Musical Courier* for August, 1920, she summarized the ways in which she had adapted eurythmics to the teaching of music in the public schools in her district, in spite of limitations of time and actual working space:

Limitations of Space and Costume

"Most teachers of music will agree that the teaching of rhythm presents the most difficult problem in music teaching. It is my firm conviction, as a teacher of music, that a child's capacity for acquiring a musical education is limited only by the teacher's ability. Therefore it is

reasonable for me to suppose that the child's difficulty in getting a clear understanding of rhythm is caused by impractical, involved and vague methods of teaching. . . . It was Jaques-Dalcroze who discovered that all people, adults as well as children, should base their musical education on the automatic exercises of the instinctive movements of marching, clapping, running and skipping. After my visit to the Dalcroze Institute in Geneva, I became a student of eurythmics myself and through that training, I arrived at an adaptation of its principles to the teaching of rhythm in the public schools. The Dalcroze pupil usually works in a costume that leaves the arms and legs bare; they hold their classes in large halls allowing plenty of space for running and skipping; the teacher improvises the music. Our school rooms are small, allowing little more than aisle space; our children must wear their ordinary clothes which hamper their movements; our teachers are required to teach various subjects of the curriculum and are, for the most part, inadequately equipped to teach music, let alone improvise it. It would seem impossible then to apply the Dalcroze idea to the teaching of music in American school rooms. However, it can be done and it was done.

Rhythmic Training for Teachers and Pupils

"If we train children to sing while they beat with their arms and step with their feet, we can approach the basic

idea of the Dalcroze training, namely the feeling for and realization of the rhythm. If teachers of grade music could be assembled and themselves given the experience of walking, running, skipping and clapping to the music of scales sung by them in rhythm, they would be convinced of the value of the idea for teaching. The joy of the discovery of the rhythmic effects of music through bodily motion would offset the usual uninspired 'digging out' of the mathematical values of notes. What we know, we teach well. It would be a simple matter if teachers had this personal experience with rhythmic realization, to establish in children a technic of bodily motions so that the response to rhythm would become automatic."

Eurythmics for the Blind

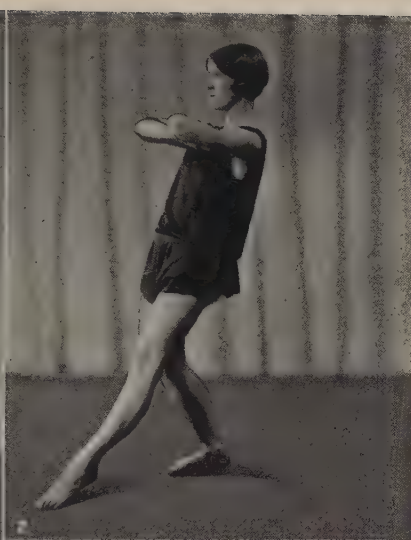
Another experiment, perhaps even more interesting, is the introduction of eurythmics into the teaching of music at the New York Institute for the Education of the Blind. After two years' experimental work, the teacher in charge of the music work for the younger blind children, published her experiences in the *Musical Courier* for June, 1922:

"The effort in the new line of study which has been undertaken is to enlarge the musical experience of the child. The classes meet twice a week for eurythmics and twice for elementary theory, including ear-training,

singing and notation. Simple folk songs are taught by rote to cultivate appreciation and to furnish material which can be used for analysis. . . . Although the introduction of ear-training has been a highly-valued feature of the new music work, the most important departure from the old regime has been eurythmics or rather rhythmic movement. The greatest difficulty in the adaptation of the work to blind children has been, not the fact that they cannot see what they or others are doing, but that their entire bodies are handicapped, sometimes from the same cause responsible for their blindness, more often because, through their fear of collisions, they have acquired strained and unnatural habits of movement. And yet it is through eurythmics better than through any other training which is provided that these bad movements are unlearned.

Difficulty of Teaching Rhythmic Movement

“The study of rhythmic movement by the blind necessarily progresses very slowly. The majority of the children are of foreign parentage and do not grasp directions easily, many of them are retarded mentally and they have many inhibitions due to their feeling of physical inferiority. The difficulties of spacing and direction are not so great as might be imagined. After a few weeks’ practice, a class of six or eight, some of whom have partial vision, will move in a circle as well as sighted children. Obviously



A WHOLE NOTE IN FOUR-FOUR TIME. $\frac{4}{4} = \text{C}$

Arm movements indicate measure: (1) the first beat, (2) the second, (3) the third and (4) the fourth. The first beat is strong to indicate the metric accent.

however any variation in the working form of the class presents new difficulties. New movements are taught by a very careful description, by trial and correction rather than by feeling the position of the teacher. Precision of movement is very difficult to cultivate because the children have no conception of the beauty of line or of uniformity. Since they can never compare their work with that of other pupils in the class, it is necessary for the teacher to commend and criticize constantly. Certain children are extremely self-conscious and afraid of making mistakes, but after a short time even the most timid begin to show the joy of moving independently and rhythmically. . . . It is to be hoped that the freeing of the personality through eurythmics and the cultivation of intelligent hearing and appreciation will develop musicians among the blind who not only will express music as a living art but whose very living will be influenced by the art which they express."

The Importance of Music to the Blind

In connection with this experiment with the blind, several difficulties must be borne in mind. First that all the music to be taught must be embossed and must be read by the pupils with the fingertips—all that is except what is taught by ear-training. The mere physical labor of translating, so to speak, ordinary notation into type for the blind, is tremendous. On the other

hand, music offers to the blind child one of his most important and satisfactory emotional outlets, since all the other arts are partially or entirely closed to him, and it affords to many a means of livelihood if they can become sufficiently equipped to teach. To a pupil who cannot see, how much it means to be taught music first through his ears and then through his muscles! How valuable, moreover, is a training in movement which shortens the period of learning to move freely and corrects the particular defects of posture due to blindness,—for instance the hanging head which is the result of this affliction and which reacts so unfavorably upon the personality. It is interesting to note, before closing our comments on this experiment with the blind, that this institution is now offering normal courses in music to its pupils that they may become teachers of music, not only to their fellow-blind, but to pupils who can see!

CHAPTER III

RHYTHM AND THE CHILD

PART I. RHYTHM IN GENERAL EDUCATION

Aim of the School

SCHOOL is a preparation for life. The child, on leaving school, should be in a position, not only to fulfill the divers obligations of social life but also to exercise his will in his practical affairs according to his particular temperament and without infringing on the rights of others. The training at school of his brain, body, will and sensibility should be undertaken simultaneously. No one of these four indispensable factors should be neglected in favor of another. Imagine the horrible consequences, for example, of developing body at the expense of brain! And of what use is brain without will? Again must not brain and will remain ineffectual so long as they are not regulated, controlled and harmonized by moral sensibility?

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Sensibility and Temperament

I¹ contend that schools ignore the training of sensibility with deplorable results on the development of character. It is to say the least strange that with the existing prevalence of neurasthenia, no attempt is made to direct the boundless desires arising from ill-controlled feelings. In newly developed countries where will-power is concentrated, with a marked absence of scruple, on the attainment of commercial success, educationalists show no anxiety to awaken the moral sense of the coming generation. On the other hand, in countries where too long-established traditions have a cramping influence on the development of individuality, no resort is made to expedients for arousing temperament. And yet the means are at hand whereby the coming generation might be trained to a greater flexibility of spirit, a firmer will-power, an intellect less dry and exclusive, more refined instincts, a richer life and a more complete and profound comprehension of the beautiful.

Pedagogue and Pupil

A true pedagogue should be at once psychologist, physiologist and artist. The complete citizen should leave school capable not only of living normally but of

¹ Whenever the first person is used, it applies to M. Jaques-Dalcroze, not to the editor of this revision.

feeling life. He should be in a position to create and to respond to the creations of others.

Part of Music in Education

A mere professional musician should perhaps hesitate to approach a problem of such enormous scope. So many pedagogues regard music as a mere secondary branch of knowledge, entitled only to the last and least place in the school curriculum—a poor, beggarly subject, scarcely worthy of notice. And yet the greatest minds of ancient and modern times have assigned to it an educational rôle of the highest significance. To the charge of trespassing on the domain of education proper, the musician has only to invoke the authority of Plato and most of the Greek philosophers. He might likewise refer to Montaigne, Helvetius, Locke, Leibnitz, Rousseau, Goethe and Schiller for evidence that every healthy educational system,—that is every system based on the intimately reciprocal reaction of body and mind,—feeling and thought,—assigns a preeminent place to music and the arts subservient to it.

What is Music?

Before everything else, one must make sure that the teaching of music is worth while. There must be no confusion as to what is to be understood by "Music."

There are not two kinds of music, one for adults, drawing-rooms, concert-halls; the other for children and schools. There is only one music and the teaching of it is not so difficult a matter as scholastic authorities suggest. To confine musical education to the teaching of a few patriotic songs is to give the child an idea of the ocean by showing him a drop of water in a glass. A tune is nothing other than a feeling expressed in a particular language, music. What is the use of giving children sentences to learn by heart in a language of which they are ignorant? The most important element in music lessons should be to awaken in the pupil a love for the art. For that purpose it is necessary to initiate him into the two primordial elements of music: Rhythm and tone.

Rhythm and Education

Rhythm is the basis of all vital, scientific and artistic phenomena. It produces alike the element of order and of measure in movement and the idiosyncracies of execution. The study of rhythm conduces to the formation of an individuality for all purposes of life— that is, a manner of expressing oneself according to the rhythm most natural and native to one's being which again is largely dependent on one's constitution, blood, circulation and nervous system. Rhythm is ignored in our present educational system.¹ A vague attempt is made to inculcate some

¹ In an article published not long ago in the Pedagogical Seminary, a psychologist writes: "When we consider that the mind works rhythmically—"

idea of time but children leave school without knowing the meaning of rhythm. No one surely doubts that rhythm originates in the body itself.¹ The Greeks, the most gifted of all artistic peoples from the rhythmic point of view, in marking the rhythm of their verses designated the rhythmic unit by the term "foot." Yet we have long ceased to scan verses by means of bodily movement and rhythm has become a purely intellectual conception.

Joy from Control

Joy arises in the child the moment his faculties are liberated from any restraint and he becomes conscious of his control over them and decides on the direction in

cally; that the body consists of nearly four hundred organs of motion whose action is rhythmic; that rhythm has been a factor in the development of the race and that probably the development of the race is in many ways repeated in that of the children; we are led to believe that the subject of instruction in rhythm demands more attention, both in the home and the school, than is now given to it . . . and working from this standpoint, is it not possible to build upon rhythm as a fundamental principle of human nature, to the end that the whole character of the individual may be exalted and that he may have a new delight in conforming to common standards of obedience and hope? May the child not thus be led to strive 'for the most life possible and for the greatest possible enjoyment of life with the least possible sacrifice in life's force?'" . . .

¹ In an article on Rhythm in the *Psychological Review* in 1902, R. Macdougall says: "Rhythm is never a fact of perception alone but essentially involves an *active attitude* on the part of the subject. The successive stimulations must start a series of motor impulses somewhere before its rhythm is felt. The fundamental conditions of the experience of rhythm are therefore to be looked for in the laws which govern the regularity in the functioning of the bodily organism."

which that control shall be exercised. This joy is the product of a joint sense of emancipation and responsibility, comprising a vision of our creative potentialities, a balance of natural forces, and a rhythmic harmony of desires and powers. As the child feels himself delivered from all physical embarrassment and acquires the sense of participation in collective movement, he will conceive a profound joy of an elevated character, a new factor in ethical progress, a new stimulus to will-power. I call this joy elevated because it will not be based on external circumstances. It will be distinct from pleasure in that it becomes a permanent condition of the being, independent alike of time and of the events that have given rise to it, an integral element of our organism. It will not necessarily be accompanied by laughter as is gaiety. It may quite well make no external display. It will flower in the mysterious garden of the soul.

Appreciation of Art

I am convinced that education by and in rhythm is capable of awakening a feeling for art. So far as pictorial, architectural and sculptural art is concerned, it is not enough that there be schools in which the representation of lines, color, light and shade, relief and grouping are taught. The students of these schools must be trained to respond with their whole beings to the rhythmic movement that raises, sets, balances, harmonizes and animates

works of statuary, architecture and pictorial art. Nor is it enough to teach students of music to interpret masterpieces with their fingers. Before everything they must be initiated into the sensations that have inspired the composition of these works, the movement that gave life to their emotions and the rhythm which has regulated and refined them. A Bach fugue is a dead letter to those who are unable to feel in themselves the conflicts produced by the counterpoint, and the sense of peace and harmony evoked by the synergies.

The American Child

Education as I understand it should have as its chief aim the freedom from resistances of every nature which hamper the individual in the expression of his character. It should enable him to manifest his sensibility and temperament in the most natural manner. It is not enough to be intelligent and an artist. Still more needful is the desire to continue to be both one and the other, for the progress of the race depends on the persistence of each individual member in asserting his "self" and in bringing this "self" into harmony with that of his fellows.¹ I

¹ In an article published by the National Education Association on the physical bases of character, Professor Rugh of the University of California says: "Life and character are best conceived as a harmony of rhythms." After analyzing the three series of life rhythms—dynamic, kinetic and psychic—he goes on: "If physical education is to aid in the development of character, it must obey first the laws within these rhythms themselves;

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have had opportunities for noting how the American child can vibrate and enthuse when brought into contact with art and life. Perhaps my method of training by and in rhythm will help him to advance with more confidence on the path of spiritual and physical self-conquest and to pursue his æsthetic and moral development with more certain persistence and harmony of effort.

PART 2. RHYTHM IN MUSICAL EDUCATION

Music in Schools

The progress of a people depends on the education given to its children. If it is desired that musical taste shall not remain the privilege of the cultured few, but shall penetrate the real heart of the whole people, a genuine musical education, as definite and complete as the teaching of science and morals, should be provided at school. Private music lessons are virtually confined to the children of well-to-do families, whose parents are actuated generally either by snobbishness or by respect for tradition. And there is the other side of the picture. While the affluence of some parents enables them to provide a musical education for children utterly unfitted for it, to the serious detriment of the art of music poverty alone deters other parents (to its even greater detriment) from

and secondly the laws of the relations between these rhythms. . . . The feeling of possessing power and poise, the feeling of the ability to control and direct it is a known requisite for continued efficiency or success."

making similar provisions for their genuinely talented children. Making music a compulsory school subject is the only sure means of mobilizing the vital musical forces of a country. Were it undertaken in the right spirit, efficiently organized and confided to intelligent and competent teachers, every child would at the end of two or three years be put to the test. Those who showed talent would be enabled to continue their studies to the point of attaining the maximum development of their faculties. The remainder, those devoid of all musical taste, would be relieved from the burden of lessons of no value to them. These would confer a lasting benefit on the art of music by withdrawing their ridiculous pretensions.

The Object of Musical Training

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, music was studied with a definite object: The participation in the musical side of religious ceremonies. The acquirement of musical taste was accordingly a result of studies undertaken for this purpose. Today, when religious ardor has manifestly ceased to inspire all but the most primitive vocal efforts, it behooves us to inquire whether the teaching of music in our schools is not a mere survival of routine, and if so, whether it is not time we replaced it (now that its original meaning has disappeared) by a more vital incentive to progress. It is my belief that the time will return when the people will express in melody its simple

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joys and griefs. Children, having learned to sing in unison the old songs that charmed their forefathers, will feel inspired to create new ones. Some day we may see the end of that deplorable division of singing on recital programs into two parts: Folk songs and artistic songs.

Musical Taste

Music lessons will never be really satisfactory until they result inevitably in giving a child a genuine taste for singing, both solo and choral, and for listening to good music. Music is the most stimulating and comforting of the arts, the only one that enables us to express the heart of hearts in us and to sense the emotions common to all creation.

The Musical Instinct in Children

There are many more musical children in the world than parents believe. A small child may take no interest in music, not care for singing, march out of time in following a military band and absolutely refuse to take piano lessons, yet be not wholly lacking in musical feeling. Musical aptitudes are often deeply hidden in the individual and from one cause or another may fail to find the means of manifesting themselves—just as certain springs flow underground and are only brought to the surface after a pickaxe has opened up the way. One of the functions of

education should be to develop the musical instinct of children. But how is this to be awakened at an early age? What are its external signs?

Early Training in Appreciation

Many parents imagine that the mere possession of a clear and accurate voice implies musical talent. This is far from being the case. As everyone knows, it is rhythm that gives meaning and form to juxtaposition of sounds. A child who can improvise, in a charming voice, successions of notes without order or measure may be a far inferior musician to one who has no voice but can improvise satisfactory marching rhythms on a drum. On the other hand some parents say: "It's no good giving our child music lessons; he's got no voice." Yet on examination an expert might find that the child in question was very far from having no voice, that he was merely incapable of coordinating his vocal system with the sounds he was asked to imitate. The fault may lie with his ear, which is quite sound but unpractised. He should be taught to appreciate the nuances of music and to judge whether one is playing softly, loudly, in treble or bass, quickly or slowly, near or far from him, legato or staccato. He can be shown the difference between crescendo and diminuendo by placing him behind a door to be gently opened or closed while the music is in progress. And when he listens to a military band, he can be told that

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each instrument has a different voice: that the big trombone has a deep intonation like papa, and that the clarinet speaks like mamma, while the flute squeaks like Aunt Mathilda.

Story Songs

What an obvious opportunity is missed by parents who must know how children love stories in not attempting to rouse their interest in music by playing little pieces of a realistic order, illustrative of a story. The characters might consist of personages lending themselves to musical treatment—galloping horses; little mice with their short, quick movements; chiming bells, etc. I have found children follow with intense interest the little descriptive pieces of Schumann, Reinecke, Burgmein, Ingelbrecht, Déodat de Séverac, Fibich and the like. Long before he knows how to produce the sounds himself the child may thus be taught to listen to music.

Action Songs

This is perhaps the best way in which a mother, so long as she is careful not to overdo things, to stop at the first yawn, may arouse in her child not only an interest in but the indispensable love for music. The important thing is that the child should learn to feel music, to absorb it, to give his body and soul to it. He should listen not merely with his ear but with his whole being. Twenty

years ago I wrote some little songs and set children to punctuate them with bodily movements. I frequently noticed that children who did not care for music and detested singing came to love the songs through love of the movements. The two essential elements in music are rhythm and sound. Often a taste for rhythmic movement will lead a child whose auditive faculties are slight to appreciate music.

Ear-training Before Piano Technique

Parents often confuse music with the piano. One is only a real musician if one plays the piano. It is nothing less than lunacy to set a child to study an instrument before he has been trained to appreciate rhythm and distinguish sounds. Pianoforte lessons, unless preceded by training of the ear and by rhythmic movement, frequently damage the aural and rhythmic faculties. Piano teachers will themselves agree with me that it is too much to expect them to teach at the same time the technique of the instrument and the first elements of music. There is something profoundly ludicrous in the fact that while musical instinct is based on the experience of the ear, a child is taught exclusively to play and sing, never to hear and listen. How strange that a master should never think of saying: "Now keep quiet and listen for a minute; I am going to play you a minuet of Haydn's or a rondo by Clementi and you shall tell me what you think of it." A

child who forms a taste for singing and good music will retain it all his life.

Natural Order of Teaching Music

Every sound method of teaching music, therefore must be based on the hearing as much as on the emission of sounds. If the hearing faculties of a pupil are weak, they must be developed before he undertakes the study of theory. The noise of a drum calls for neither analysis nor reflection (that is why the drum is so essentially a military instrument). To many children sound is merely a noise. It is manifestly absurd to commence their musical training with a comparative study of noises. As soon as pupils can distinguish between tones and semitones, they can commence the comparative study of scales. Scales are the successions of tones and semi-tones which give the character of a key. Once the scales are mastered, the remaining musical studies, with the important exception of those of a rhythmic order, will be child's play, the pupil finding an explanation for everything by reference to the scales. Intervals will be seen as fragments of scales with intermediate sounds left out. Chords will be seen as notes of a scale on top of one another. Resolutions will be identified as the property given to notes of a scale left suspended to continue their progress. Modulation becomes simply the linking of one scale with another. Everything relating to melody and harmony is implicit



AN EXERCISE IN RHYTHMIC MOVEMENT BY PUPILS OF THE NEW YORK SCHOOL OF
DALCROZE EURYTHMICS.

They are indicating by movements of the arm a measure in $\frac{2}{4}$ time.

in the comparative study of keys and becomes thereafter only a question of terminology and classification.

Musical Rhythm Through Bodily Rhythm

There remains the element of rhythm. The gift of musical rhythm is not a mere mental affair. It is physical in essence. Set a child to sing while in motion. If his steps do not coincide with the beat of the time he is singing or which others may be singing, he is lacking in a natural sense of time-measure. If he is unable at will to accentuate one or another of the steps, he is lacking in a natural sense of rhythm. And just as one may teach a deaf-mute to speak by means of lip-movements which have no correspondence in his mind to the idea of hearing, so by accustoming the body to regular symmetrical movements under the control of eye and muscular senses a feeling for musical rhythm may be produced in an a-rhythmic pupil.¹ For as La Rochefoucauld puts it: "We are more disposed to indolence in our minds than in our bodies and good physical habits conduce to good mental ones."

Phrasing and Shading

Phrasing and shading must be learned through movement also and this part of the training in rhythm will produce positive enthusiasm. Once teachers begin to

¹ See Chapter IV, page 70.

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teach their pupils the real elements of shading and phrasing they will be astounded and delighted to observe the interest they evoke,¹ and the joy with which they are applied. We are too likely to appeal to the child's instinct for imitation, to the detriment of his sense of analysis and his inventive faculties. In Pascal's words: "It is dangerous to let the child see how like an animal he is without also showing him the grandeur and nobility that is in him." The child loves nothing so much as to construct and embellish, according to his fancy, things that appeal to him. Similarly he wants lessons which give scope for individuality. Once he has learned the primary rules of shading he will never want to sing a tune without being allowed to decorate it with its natural accompaniments—rhythmic and emotional expression and accentuation.

Improvisation

All children feel this craving to create and the teacher should lose no opportunity of turning this disposition to account. He should set them free from their earliest lessons to improvise short phrases of two bars, then four, then eight, or to replace a bar of a melody by one of their own composition. He will find them revelling in such

¹ In Chapter I will be found the description of some of the exercises in eurythmics. Exercises 1, 5 and 6 best illustrate the principles of shading and phrasing in movement.

exercises and making rapid progress in improvising. Let him further appoint different pupils to judge their comrades' efforts and he will note that their instinct for criticism and analysis is as strong as that for creation, and that with practice children can speedily acquire a really subtle and discriminating judgment.

CHAPTER IV

RHYTHM AND MENTAL CONTROL

PART I. COORDINATION OF MIND AND BODY THROUGH RHYTHM

Rhythmic Training Versus Gymnastics

IN gymnastics of the hygienic and athletic orders, the body is exercised without reference to rhythm. The smattering of regularity and symmetry with which the bodily movements of the class are invested to facilitate supervision serves neither to awaken nor to produce rhythmic consciousness. To develop the sense of rhythm in a child it is not enough to set him to execute regular and simultaneous movements. He must be accustomed to movements of divers intensity, producing divisions of time whose different durations are in musical rhythmic relation. The most difficult exercises in complex movement are achieved with the greatest ease by pupils endowed with a sense of musical rhythm however defective their physique. The simplest exercises present enormous

difficulties to those who lack that sense, no matter how well proportioned they may be. A person of rhythmic propensities always presents a certain harmony, an effect of perfect corporal balance. Physical grace can only be acquired or developed in children in corresponding degree to the development of their instinct for rhythm.

Natural Rhythms of the Body

A child's body possesses instinctively the essential element of rhythm which is sense of time.¹ Thus, the beats of the heart by their regularity convey a clear idea of time but they are a matter of unconscious activity, independent of the will and therefore valueless for the purpose of execution and perception of rhythm. The action of breathing provides a regular division of time and is thus a model of measure. The respiratory muscles, being subject to the will in however qualified a degree, we are able to operate them rhythmically, that is to say, to divide the time and accentuate each division by a stronger muscular tension. A regular gait furnishes us

¹ In an article in the *Pedagogical Seminary*, a psychologist makes this observation: "These studies (that is, an investigation into the effect of musical rhythms upon children) suggest that rhythm is fundamental and they furnish support to the assertion that 'the infant is capable of attending to rhythmic stimuli long before it is capable of any other act of attention.' Professor E. F. Bartholomew, author of *The Relation of Psychology to Music* in a personal letter to me writes as follows: 'I have observed marks of musical appreciation, or perhaps I had better say, rhythmic appreciation at the age of about two weeks.'"

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with a perfect model of measure and of the division of time into equal portions.

Complete Response to Rhythm

Now the locomotor muscles are conscious muscles subject to absolute control by the will. We therefore find in walking the natural starting point in the child's initiation into rhythm. But walking is only the starting point, for the feet and legs are not the only limbs set in motion by conscious muscles and so available for the awakening and development of the consciousness of rhythm. This consciousness demands the cooperation of all conscious muscles and thus a training of the whole body is required to create rhythmic feeling.

Reflex Rhythmic Movements

When a pupil at the piano commits an error in rhythm, the limbs of the teacher involuntarily seek to rectify it, not merely by beating time (that is a conscious gesture with a definite pedagogic aim) but by a spontaneous effort of the whole body to put the accent in the right place. Not merely one of his limbs, but all of them simultaneously stiffen, infusing energy into his muscles and conveying to the pupil the image of what he should have sensed before committing the error. The pupil himself should have been guided by the representation of rhythm reflected in all the muscles of his body. The conscious-

ness of rhythm, thanks to the necessary exercises, produces a constant reciprocal influence of the rhythmic action in its representation and vice versa. The teacher, in expounding rhythm by gesture, translates into movement his own reaction to rhythm. He seeks by this manifestation to awaken the same reaction in his pupil that the latter may translate it into the form of movement peculiar to him. The representation of rhythm, the reflex of a rhythmic action, is potential in all our muscles. Inversely, rhythmic movement is the visible manifestation of rhythmic consciousness. The one follows the other in uninterrupted sequence. They are indissolubly linked together. ✓

Orchestra Leaders

Observe the movements by which a conductor of an orchestra endowed with temperament represents and transmits rhythm.¹ Does he confine himself to move-

¹ "It has often seemed to me that the bearing of musical conductors is significant for the study of national characteristics and especially for the difference between the English and the Continental neuro-psychic systems. One always feels inhibition and suppression in the movements of the English conductor, some psychic element holding the nervous play in check and producing a stiff, wooden embarrassed rigidity or an ostentatiously languid and careless indifference.

"At the extreme remove from this is Birnbaum, that gigantic and feverishly active spider whose bent body seems to crouch over the whole orchestra, his magically elongated arms to stretch out so far that his wand touches the big drum. But even the quietest of these foreign conductors, Nikisch for example, gives no impression of psychic inhibition but rather of that refined and deliberate economy of means which marks the ac-

ments of the arm alone in seeking to convey to the instrumentalists the image of the rhythm they are to create? By no means. His knees will stiffen, his foot will press against the platform, his back will straighten, his finger and wrist movements harden. His whole body will be seen to cooperate in his representation of the rhythm. Each articulation, each muscle, will contribute to render the rhythmic impression more intense. The aspect of his whole person becomes the reflected image of the movement of the music and animates the executants, his own representation of the rhythm being transferred to them.

Muscular Consciousness of Rhythm

Another example: After my pupils have studied eurythmics for a certain time I give them exercises in interrupted marching. They will execute a few bars of a rhythmic march then halt for a bar (later several bars) in the position of the last executed bar. The duration of the interruption, the length of the pause, must be estimated and accentuated only in thought. It is strictly forbidden to count out loud or under the breath or to move any limb. Yet what do I find? Those who have

completed artist. Most of the English conductors of the old school seem to be saying all the time: 'I am in an awkward and embarrassing position though I shall muddle through successfully. The fact is I am rather out of my element here. I am really a Gentleman.'" Havelock Ellis in *Impressions and Comments*.

not yet attained confidence in the faculty they are on the way to acquire (that of *thinking* in rhythm) seek to deceive me, and themselves too, perhaps, by employing muscles other than those of the leg to execute the rhythm. I catch movements of an eyelid, a nostril, a toe, even an ear and I have had expressly to prohibit the beating of time with the tongue! Every musician by experimenting on himself will find that after counting one or two bars mentally he will feel vibrating in his whole organism the echo of the time value and that while he appears to be immobile, his muscles are invisibly collaborating with his mental process. Man instinctively feels rhythmic vibrations in all his conscious muscles; that is why it behooves a teacher of rhythm to train through and in rhythm the whole muscular system so that every muscle may contribute its share in awakening, clarifying, moulding and perfecting rhythmic consciousness.

Meter and Rhythm in Art

A machine, however perfectly regulated, is devoid of rhythm, being controlled by time. To regulate the movements effected by a manual laborer in the exercise of his calling is by no means to assure the rhythm of his activity. The handwriting of a copyist conveys the impression of mechanical and impersonal regularity. That of a writer giving rein to his inspiration records the rhythm of his temperament. Versification is only the metrical

side of poesy. The rhythmic of poesy depend on the underlying thoughts, impulses and non-reasoning qualities. Natural dancing may be duly measured without revealing the impulsive spirit, the physical and moral fantasy that is the rhythm of the dancer. The submission of our breathing to discipline and regularity of time would lead to the suppression of every instinctive emotion and the disorganization of vital rhythm.

A-rhythm or Lack of Bodily Harmony

To be a-rhythmic is to be incapable of following a movement in the exact time required for its normal execution; to hurry it here or delay it there instead of keeping it at a uniform pace; not to know how to accelerate it when acceleration is necessary, or to draw it out when protraction is necessary; to make it rough and jerky instead of smooth and continuous, and vice versa; to commence or finish too late or too soon; not to be able to link a movement of one sort on to a movement of another sort,—a slow to a quick, a flexible to a rigid, a rigorous to a gentle movement; to be incapable of executing simultaneously two or more conflicting movements, nor to know how to shade a movement—that is to execute it in an imperceptible gradation from piano to forte, and vice versa, or to accentuate it, metrically or pathetically, at the points fixed by the musical form or emotion. All these deficiencies without exception may be attributed

either to inability of the brain to issue its orders promptly to the muscles responsible for the execution of the movement; to inability of the nervous system to transmit these orders accurately and smoothly to the muscles; or inability of the muscles to execute them infallibly. A-rhythm arises then from a lack of harmony and coordination between the conception and the execution of the movement, and from the nervous irregularity that sometimes is the product of and at other times produces this disharmony.

Lack of Coordination

With some people the brain may conceive the rhythms normally enough, having inherited a supply of clear and distinct rhythmic images, but the limbs, while perfectly capable of executing these rhythms, are hampered by a disordered nervous system. Others suffer from the inability of their limbs to execute the perfectly distinct orders of the brain, and this ineffectual nervous functioning eventually produces a breakdown of the system. With others again, who possess perfectly sound nerves and muscles, the clear registration in the brain of durable images is impeded by inadequate education in rhythm. The object of rhythmic training is to regulate the natural rhythms of the body and by making them automatic, to create definite rhythmic images in the brain.

Variety of National Rhythms

I have had occasion to note all the varieties of rhythmic aptitudes in children of nearly every race and type in the course of twenty-five years' experience, not only in teaching eurythmics and developing auditive faculties, but also in producing my action songs for children designed for accompaniment by gesture. These roundelays have been sung in every country and I have often been amazed to note the extreme difficulty the little singers have experienced in moving gracefully to the rhythms of the music and in counterpointing the simplest melodies with gestures in time; how resistances of every kind impede the free play of their instinctive rhythmic movement. The children of southern climes have a natural aptitude for the accomplishment of supple and graceful movement but lack precision and force in executing energetic and emphatic gestures. Children of northern countries on the other hand possess the faculty of effectively punctuating rhythms by means of gesture but not that of balancing and shading successions of rounded movements. We may conclude from this that the rhythmic character of the music of a country will conform to the physical aptitudes of its inhabitants for as is well known, grace and flexibility are the distinctive features of the spirit of the Mediterranean music, while the Teutonic musical characteristics are vigor and force of accentuation allied to a too-sudden and rapid opposition of forte and piano—that is, lack of flexibility in shading.

Releasing the Natural Rhythms of the Body

It was the observation of this too common a-rhythm that encouraged me to pursue my physiological studies to the point of instituting a new form of education. This education aims at restoring to the child his complete corporal mechanism and freeing his natural rhythm (that is, the spontaneous muscular expression of his temperament) from the inhibitions which too frequently impede this expression. I think I may claim, despite the criticism of those who judge my method only from its external side, to have created an indispensable complement to the education of children in every country. If the children of one country reveal blemishes in the motor system not to be found in children of another country, there are also appropriate exercises to combat all forms of bad motor habits and to transform them into new and good ones. The teaching of eurythmics should certainly vary according to the temperament and character of the children of every country in which it is introduced. It only remains to persuade psychologists¹ and educators to

¹ That psychologists, both here and abroad, are interested in this problem no one can doubt who follows their publications. During the last decade there have been dozens of articles in their magazines dealing with the analysis of rhythm. One of the most interesting of these is an exhaustive study of rhythm made by a Swiss psychologist, Professor Forel in the *Journal für Psychologie und Neurologie* in 1920. The article begins with the study of solar rhythms and deals in turn with body-rhythms (internal and external) musical rhythms, etc. In it Professor Forel says that "man tends to transform any movement into rhythmic movement, and is not always economical in the transformation. The rhythmic move-

direct their experimental researches towards the study of rhythmic aptitudes and motor and auditive predispositions.

PART 2. EDUCATION OF TEMPERAMENT BY RHYTHM

Muscular and Mental Inhibitions

There is an immediate connection between the instinctive movements of our body and the processes of our psychic life. The more we succeed in liberating our movements from the restraints imposed by circumstance, environment and heredity, the more we shall eliminate intellectual and nervous inhibitions. A balance of the fundamental faculties of the individual can never be

ments of children are very elaborate. . . . Karl Groos has shown that the games of children and of young animals are not, as is generally supposed the result of a surplus of energy . . . they are biological in origin. . . . Certain neurologists send their patients to walk, to gymnasiums, to sporting clubs; others to chop wood, to dig and to perform other labors. The results are incontestably good but take a long time. It is necessary to find a method which will give the same results in a shorter time. . . . A method similar to that of Jaques-Dalcroze but adapted especially to the end of psycho-therapeutics will render a great service to neurology. The individual trained to fight against the biological laziness of his nature will acquire suppleness of mind and body. A judicious method which aims to develop the inherited aptitude for rhythm, a method which will give the patient balance and the suppleness which he has lost or has never had, can in the majority of cases restore mental calm and clear the ground of the neurotic weeds with which it is encumbered. . . . We believe that this problem should interest the medical neurologist as much as the professor. A rational method of re-education, which teaches the infinite possibilities of varied rhythmic movement will help to perfect the results of psycho-therapy, which is too mental in its application, too much concerned with symptoms and not sufficiently psycho-physiological."

attained unless from an early age the organism is habituated to the free play of its forces, the unhampered expression of its mental and motor powers, and a regular alternation (controlled alike by sub-conscious instincts and conscious will-power) of physical and spiritual rhythms. This alternation constitutes temperament.

The Man of Action and the Man of Thought

The man of science should be capable at a moment's notice of translating himself into a man of action. Indeed, the ideal education is one that will enable our children to subordinate their practical to their mental habits and to convert their intellectual rhythms into physical actions of the same order. The "intellectual" should no longer be differentiated from the man of physical capacities. There should be a medium of free exchange and intimate union between the respective organs of action and of thought.

The Cure for Neurasthenia

A time will come when we shall attain freedom through a complete reconquest of the muscular sense, bringing our acts into direct union with our desires. Therein lies the cure for neurasthenia. The two poles of our being will be intimately connected by a single rhythm: the expression of our individuality. And thereupon art will lose its metaphysical character and become a spontaneous

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manifestation of our inner being, directly representing the rhythms of life.

The New Education

The question of education assumes a capital importance in relation to post-war generations. This is universally recognized. England among other countries is conducting experiments which aim to provide for the student the means of self-knowledge and a harmony between his ethical and mental conceptions. English educators believe that the simplest means for the expression of individuality lie in a perfect understanding of one's physical potentialities. It is the duty of educators everywhere to see that educational methods do not stagnate; to advance in the direction of an educational system that will limit the number of purely intellectual studies (*i.e.* those which aim chiefly at giving information and relating facts) and so provide time in the curriculum for the development of what we may call the temperamental sense of our future citizens.

Education is Self-knowledge and Adaptability

The possession of highly developed impulses and racial instincts should be supplemented by the power of controlling these faculties by an intelligence instructed in the diversity of their powers. Education must no longer confine itself to the enlightenment of pupils in intellectual

and physical phenomena. It must assist in the formation of character. It must assure to children the consciousness both of their weaknesses and of their capacities; it must rectify the former as it strengthens the latter. It must enable the future citizen to adapt himself to the exigencies of the new social order. It is no longer a question of a simple development of the scientific and analytical mentality, but rather of an evolution of the entire organism.

The Aim of Eurythmics

" It is this development of the organism—mind, body and spirit—which I have kept before me in planning my exercises in eurythmics. Their aim is to strengthen the power of concentration; to accustom the body to hold itself at high pressure, in readiness to execute orders from the brain; to connect the conscious with the sub-conscious; to augment the sub-conscious faculties by a special culture designed for that purpose. In addition these exercises tend to create more numerous habitual motions and new reflexes, to obtain the maximum effect by a minimum of effort, and so to purify the spirit, strengthen the will-power and bring order and clarity into the human organism.¹

¹ A young lady (needless to say, a Dalcroze pupil) who had charge of a radio station at Washington during the war, wrote as follows to her teacher: "I have just 'got' the connection between rhythm or vibration and life in general and I am going to try to explain it to you. You've had physics I am sure so you understand the phenomenon of two bodies having the

same natural period of vibration, two strings that sound the same note for example. If we have two bodies, two tuning forks, with different periods, and sound them together we have a recurrent waxing and waning of sound or beats. The waves from one are superposed on the waves of the other. What happens is that the frequencies interfere. Where they are in the same phase, or direction up and down, they reinforce one another and where they are in the opposite direction they nullify one another; and only part of the energy given off by each is usable by the other. If they are of the same period there is no barrier to the exchange of energy since the waves will always reinforce each other and we have *amplification of energy*. Now in radio work for the exchange of energy the electrical period of one system must be made the same as that of the other when they are said to be 'in resonance,' the process of adjusting either system to resonance being called 'tuning.' And that is what goes on in rhythmic movement. The human body has its natural muscular period differing for each individual and the energy given out in the form of music, of a very definite period, is exchanged with the energy of motion given out by the pupil. What happens? If the adjustment of the human body, its 'tuning,' is successful, there is no loss of energy but a gain and this increment of energy is felt in the body, as you can testify in that blissful satisfaction that every Dalcroze pupil has experienced when the body has been absolutely fitted to a rhythm. And again when the adjustment is unsuccessful, what happens? The periods interfere, there is loss of energy and a feeling of frustration and weariness. Perhaps the most conspicuous illustration of this fundamental principle may be found in ordinary ballroom dancing where the two individuals represent the two systems and where the 'tuning' or adjustment is vital to the exchange of energy in motion. The good dancer is the one best able to 'tune' or coordinate to many different periods; on the other hand you get two systems with the same natural period and no adjustment is necessary. Neither individual may be a good dancer and yet to each the effect will be that of dancing with the most perfect dancer, since there is gain and not loss of energy. I've had it happen to me—the nearest thing to disembodiment possible."

CHAPTER V

THE DANCER AS AN INTERPRETER OF MUSIC

PART I. THE DECADENCE OF DANCING

The Reason for this Decline

DANCING is the art of expressing emotion by means of rhythmic bodily movements. It is not the function of rhythm to render these movements expressive, but merely to refine and control them; to make them artistic by means of a conscious change of their relations. From remotest antiquity we find the dance accompanied by forms of music, aiming at the rhythmic regulation of gesture, evolutions and attitude. This musical accompaniment may not be strictly necessary; but if we admit that the art of dancing involves a fusion of rhythmic sound and movement, we are forced to the conclusion that the state of decadence into which dancing has fallen in our time is due to two causes: First the exaggerated development of bodily skill at the expense of expression; and second, the failure to understand the principle I have just set

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forth: that there must be a complete unity of bodily and musical rhythms.

The Modern Ballet

In the modern ballet, music and dancing are separated owing to the corresponding divorce between musical and choreographic training. This has been the case for so long that there exists very little ballet music suitable for dancing and very few bodily rhythms involved in dancing that can inspire composers with original musical ideas. If we examine the present day ballet music, we find that the time units are commonly too short to enable legs and arms to express them synchronously. We may conclude from this that composers of ballet music are unacquainted with the instrument for which they are writing and producing music the greater part of which is impracticable for its proclaimed purposes. On the other hand we find that when, in the course of ballet music, passages suitable for expression by the body do occur, the dancers do not even attempt to reconcile their movements with the rhythm of the music and content themselves with adopting the conventional interpretation. This leads us to our second conclusion: that ballet dancers are ignorant of the laws of sound rhythm. And these two conclusions lead to our third that if we wish to instigate a revival of dancing as an art, we must provide an education that will enable dancers to understand the



A



B



C



D

"PLASTIC MUSIC RENDERS SOUNDS VISIBLE."

Four skipping steps illustrating two different rhythms. A and B represent the same rhythm



; in A the movements are forward; in B, backward. C and D represent the

same rhythm   ; in C the movements are forward; in D, backward.

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music they are to express plastically; and we must familiarize composers with the laws of balance and bodily movement in all their nuances.

The Unsatisfied Spectator

Often when present at displays of dancing, frantically applauded by the spectators, I have wondered why my musical taste was offended and why, despite the undoubted talent of the performer, a feeling of discomfort was awakened in me as well as an impression of something artificial, something prepared and unnatural. I have heard painters, endowed with admirable judgment, express their enthusiasm at the splendor of the attitudes, the refinement of the gestures, the harmony of the groupings and the audacity of the acrobatic movements. Admitting these qualities and bowing before so much artistic feeling, sincerity, ability and knowledge, I still could not bring myself to feel the slightest æsthetic emotion and could only accuse myself of coldness, lack of understanding and philistinism.

Preparation and Continuity of Movement

A production of Debussy's "L'Après Midi d'un Faune" a few years ago revealed to me the cause of my misgivings and distaste. A procession of nymphs moved slowly onto the stage, pausing every eight or twelve steps to enable their charming attitudes (copied from Greek vases) to be

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adequately admired. On continuing their march in the last attitude assumed, they would attack the following attitude without any preparatory movement, thus giving the jerky impression that would be conveyed at the cinema by a series of movements from which the essential portions of the film had been suppressed. I then understood that what had shocked me was the lack of connection which should be present in every manifestation of life heightened by thought. The exquisite attitudes of the Greek nymphs followed each other without any attempt at linking them by a human and natural process. They formed a series of pictures, most artistic in effect, but voluntarily deprived of all the advantages obtained by time duration—I mean continuity, the potentialities of slow development, the easy preparation and inevitable climax of plastic movement in space—all of them essentially musical elements. It is this musical basis of movement which alone assures truth and naturalness to the union of gesture and music.

Definition of Attitude

Guided by this experience, I analyzed in the same way the movements of various dancers of the highest distinction, and noted that those among them who were most truly musicians, while endeavoring to follow the pattern of the music in the most scrupulous manner, had no more regard for the principle of continuity of movement and of plastic phrasing than the nymphs mentioned

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above. I mean that in the play of their limbs, the point of departure was the *attitude* and not the *movement itself*. Attitudes are pauses in the movement. Every time that a punctuation mark is inserted in the uninterrupted sequence of movements, forming what might be called the plastic melody—a pause corresponding to a comma, a semi-colon or a period in speech—the movement becomes static and is perceived as an attitude.

Appeal of Dancer not to Eye Alone

A gulf separates the movements of the Greek *orchesis* from those of our modern ballet. And yet it is indisputable that the majority of the latter were originally founded on the purest classical traditions; only the spirit that animated the dances of the ancients is extinct; life has left them. There remain only a few fundamental attitudes and positions, but how restrained and standardized! Admitting that some of the ballet effects possess a certain grace and picturesqueness that may give rise, on occasion, to considerable pleasure, this pleasure is confined to the eyes and cannot attain any really emotional or musical value. Yet music is the basis of the most conventional dance. We have a right to demand from dancers that elements of musical phrasing, shading, time and dynamics should be observed by them as scrupulously as practicable. To dance in time is not everything. It is essential to penetrate musical thought to its depths while

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following the melodic lines and the rhythmic pattern, not necessarily to the letter, but in such a way that what the spectator sees may not be out of harmony with what he hears.

What Ballet Training Does

The present training of dancers is long and arduous. And what does it produce? The execution by the legs of a number of small, quick—and ugly—movements without expression or delicacy; the power of effecting prodigious leaps like frogs and revolutions like spinning tops! In arm gestures, as we have already explained, the dancer is entirely deficient. Adequate facial and ocular play can never be achieved so long as the dancer is uncultured in feeling and thought. And even the acrobatic dancing that constitutes the triumph of our *premières ballerines* is confined to flat surfaces. How unfortunate that specialization in exercises of ballet technique has not even initiated dancers into evolutions on divers forms of surfaces and on staircases, to say nothing of teaching them to walk slowly and with grace.

The Opera Ballet

In stage dancing, as may still be witnessed in the more important operatic performances, bodily movements tend neither to express feelings nor to transpose sound movements. They rarely harmonize at all with the music

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which is supposed to have evoked them and the limbs that execute them are not even themselves in harmony. The arms ignore the movements of the legs, or rather they have the air of refusing to follow the latter in their evolutions. They confine themselves to maintaining balance and might as well belong to a different body. As to the legs, their rôle would appear to consist in repudiating the weight of the body. Dancers without knowing it merely emphasize the material aspect of the body in seeking to negate its weight by a series of leaps and bounds.

The Body an Orchestra

Every human body comprises more numerous potential orchestral effects than the most complex symphonic body. To what extent and in what manner could and should this human orchestra ally its rhythms to those of the orchestra of sound? No musical critic would hold it right for the clarinets to play in a different key from the rest of the orchestra, or for a pianist to execute his part in a concerto in a different style from that adopted by the instruments accompanying him. Yet we do not find two critics in a hundred commenting on the confusion of style, time, phrasing and shading that may exist between the movements of a *corps de ballet* or of a solo dancer professing to interpret a musical piece. Their minds have so deliberately accepted the disharmony between the physical movements and the sound rhythms that their

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ears positively cease to listen to the music once their eyes compel them to follow the spectacle, and vice versa. It seems quite natural that on the stage the human body should be perpetually trying to repudiate the laws of gravity; that the ambition of the dancer should be to imitate the bird instead of to transfigure the man; to produce the picturesque and artificial instead of to enoble and refine the gestures of natural life.¹

Critics of Dancing

Every time we attend a display of dancing, we are staggered by the incoherence of the spectators' opinions and the contradictions of their sentiments. Those who object in the concert hall to the technical acrobatics of instruments, applaud it in the dancer. Those who oppose transcriptions and arrangements of classical pieces, approve the most horrible travesties of them as performed by the artists of the ballet. Those again who complain of the inadequate delicacy of touch of certain pianists passively encourage the crude, exaggerated and frantic gestures of opera singers. Others who are authorities on the pictorial or sculptural representation of the human form go into raptures over the affectations and abnormal

¹ A certain pupil of M. Jaques-Dalcroze had a "try-out" before the manager of a moving-picture theatre which featured solo and group dancers on its program. After watching one or two dances this gentleman said: "You are a musician, aren't you?" The young lady admitted the charge. "That's not what we want," said the manager. "We want dancing that will make the audience say: 'How does she do it?'"

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dislocations of living and breathing bodies. Finally there are critics (and these are the worst) so perverted in taste and so steeped in the artifices of conventional choreography that, far from recognizing the absurdity of these displays, they remain impervious to the efforts of progressive artists to reform the dance as a simple and natural expression of emotion. Once these professional critics have written of a dancer that he has grace, a good carriage, balance and temperament, they have said everything. It never occurs to them to consider the degree of sympathy he has shown for the musical thought it was his business to interpret. And yet as much importance should be attached to the processes of plastic interpretation as to those of musical execution. There may be a diversity in the external means of expression dependent upon the individualities of the executants, but all dancers who are real artists, no matter how divergent their manners of bodily expression must be guided by the same motive: the interpretation of music.

Monotony of Dance Recitals

Too many solo dancers are content to narrate corporally a series of little stories without attempting to vary the medium of expression. Varieties of facial play do not suffice to produce varieties of movements of the whole body. There is not a single musical instrument, with the exception of the piano, that could be played to the ex-

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clusion of every other for two consecutive hours without wearying an audience. And the same applies to the solo dancer. On the other hand, the union of a number of dancers permits of as much variety of effect as the play of several instruments.

Emotional Expression

Gesture in itself is nothing. Its whole value depends on the emotion that inspires it, and no form of dance, however rich in technical combinations of corporal attitudes, can ever be more than an unmeaning amusement so long as it does not aim at depicting human emotions in their fulness and intimate veracity. Before all else the plastic interpreter of musical emotions must be made capable of deeply sensing these emotions for any attempt at expression on the part of one not genuinely inspired by music is a sham. Consider the admirable Russian dancers with their fiery temperament, their grace, flexibility and undeniable rhythmic qualities. Watch them, on occasion, discard their dizzy gyratory effects in an attempt to bring out the lyric essence of a dramatic situation. Their movements at once lose all ease and sincerity. Sentiment is replaced by sentimentality, natural expression by grandiloquence; each gesture of passion, shame, desire, suffering, is exaggerated to an extreme. A constant vibrato animates their movements. A continuous crude expansion asserts itself. The immodesty of simulated emotion is exposed

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in all its nakedness. Does this mean that the dancers lack science, tact and intelligence? Not in the least. The cause of this exaggeration of attitudes and gestures is the lack of a close coordination between their sensibilities and those of the musician. The music does not directly react on their sensitive faculties, does not irresistibly inspire the natural means of bodily expression. They are unable to express music through incapacity to take it in.

PART 2. THE REFORM OF DANCING

The Music of Movement

The music of movement, like the music of sound, aims at expressing the common emotions of humanity. The music that is within us and which is composed of our natural rhythms and of the emotions that determine the sensations peculiar to our temperament, may assume different forms according to the capacities of individuals. In dancing it must translate itself at once into sound and movement. Sound-music regulates, controls and refines plastic movement which otherwise would be abandoned to the anarchy of movements. Plastic, on the other hand renders sounds visible and gives them a human touch.

The Dance a Dialogue

In many respects the dance may be compared to a concerto for violin and orchestra in which the soloist engages in a dialogue with the other instruments and where

now one, now another of the two protagonists remains silent for a moment to enable his interlocutor to speak. In dancing, however, the dialogue is conducted in two different languages; plastic phrases respond to musical phrases. The essential is that artistic and æsthetic emotion should be expressed. For the rest, plastic language has as many and as varied resources as music.

Teaching the Dancer to Walk

In the first place, the dancer must be rendered capable of walking in time, whatever the movement be—which is by no means so easy as might be thought. Dancers as a rule do not know how to walk slowly; they cannot keep balance. The virtuosity of their legs is confined to quick movements. Ordinary stage dancers are incapable of walking slowly. We have all seen them waddle back to the wings, like ducks, after their turns. Choreographic training deforms the natural play of their joints. In my exercises in measured walking—to me the alphabet of choreographic training—the student learns to control the harmony of the active muscles and their complements. His steps vary from the slowest largo to a lively allegro and he learns to practise *accelerandos*, *ritenutos* and *rubatos* in walking without losing his balance. In addition, different kinds of walking are evoked by the different pace of musical phrases and are adapted to *staccatos*, *legatos*, *portandos*, and the like effects of music. There

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exist here as many variations as in the bow-strokes of a violinist. The study of repressions of steps is of even more importance inasmuch as the cessation of movement constitutes for dancing purposes a powerful means of creating contrasts and of introducing polyphony in the expression of feelings.

Interpreting the Inspiration of the Composer

Every musical work comprises an element of inspiration and of thematic development and architecture. This latter element depends on the intellect and physique and may be expressed differently by dancer-interpreters, according as their aptitudes or understandings have formed their various techniques. But the inspiration present at the creation of the music should be revived in the transposition of musical rhythms into movements in space; the same breath should animate both sound and corporal expression. A dancer of the old ballet school should be able to express the soul of music as faithfully through the medium of the traditional processes to which his limbs are accustomed as an Isadora Duncan by her immobility or a Sakkaroff by his polymobile effects, provided that soul has been absorbed by each of them.

The Interpreter of Music

The interpreter is no true artist unless he is capable not only of giving but once having received, humbly and

joyfully, the message of the work, of creating anew what he has received and of conveying to others, transfused, the essence of that message and of himself.

Complete Surrender to Music

Music is always with us. Let us open ourselves to it. We have relinquished to it the ardent expression of our inner life. Let us now yield to its new demands—deliver up to it without reserve the whole rhythm of our bodies to be transfigured and to emerge in the æsthetic world of light and shade, forms and colors, controlled and animated by its creative breath.

Reform of Dancing

Dancing must be completely reformed. The art is in a state of decay and must be rooted out and replaced by a new one, founded on principles of beauty, purity, sincerity and harmony. Bodies trained in the refined realization of rhythmic sensations must learn to assimilate thought and absorb music, for music is the psychological and idealizing factor in dancing. Doubtless it will be possible one day, when music has become ingrained in the body and is at one with it, when the human organism is impregnated with the many rhythms of the emotions of the soul and only requires to react naturally to express them plastically by a process of transposition in which only appearances are changed—doubtless it will be possible

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at that stage to dance without the accompaniment of sounds. The body will suffice to express the joys and sorrows of men and will not require the cooperation of instruments to dictate their rhythms. Meanwhile the body must submit to the intimate collaboration of music, or rather it must be willing to yield, without restriction, to the discipline of sounds in all their metrical and pathetic accentuations, adapting their rhythms to its own, or better still, contriving to oppose plastic to sound rhythms in a rich counterpoint never before undertaken and which must definitely establish the unity of gesture and symphony. And thus the dance of tomorrow will become a medium of expression and poesy, a manifestation of art, emotion and truth.

CHAPTER VI

EURYTHMICS AND THE ACTOR

PART I. THE INDIVIDUAL ACTOR

The Actor's Medium

“THE poet has for his material, words; the sculptor, marble or bronze; the painter, colors and canvas; the musician, sounds; but the actor is his own material. To exhibit a thought, an image, a human portrait, he works upon himself. He is his own piano; he strikes his own strings; he moulds himself like wet clay; he paints himself!”

These words of the immortal Coquelin, one of the greatest actors of modern times, were uttered in 1881. Forty years later, Jaques-Dalcroze came to much the same conclusion though his theory grew out of observation rather than experience:¹

¹ M. Jaques-Dalcroze is quoted here because the first part of this chapter, together with chapters I and II were written by the editor of this revision. See preface.

Perfecting the Medium

“Before dedicating one’s body to the service of art, it should be necessary to perfect its mechanism, to develop its capacities, and to correct its shortcomings. It is not enough that these capacities function intuitively as is the case with many gifted individuals. It is necessary in addition that they should be *exercisable consciously*, and not depend upon momentary nervous impulses. Again it is essential that the nervous system itself should be trained and regulated so as to give the brain complete liberty of control over muscular movements. All movements of the body—its gait, gestures and attitudes—should be studied not only on a flat surface such as the boards of a stage, but on different planes; on inclines of different degrees where practicable and on staircases¹ in such a way that the body may familiarize itself with space, its plastic manifestations adapting themselves to the material conditions dictated by the action and eventually imposing on the painter a new conception and treatment of scenery. Finally the organism should become an instrument of musical resonance so vibrant and of such susceptibility as to be capable of spontaneously translating into attitude and gestures all the æsthetic emotions provoked by sound rhythms.”

¹ See part four of this chapter.

Talent Alone Insufficient

The kernel of wisdom in this statement lies in the second and third sentences:

"It is not enough that these capacities function intuitively as in the case with many gifted individuals. It is necessary in addition that they should be exercisable consciously and not depend on momentary nervous impulses."

Again the findings of experience and observation, based on experiment, are identical. Coquelin says:

Controlled Emotion of the Actor

"The theatrical world is divided into two opposing camps in regard to the question whether the actor should partake of the passions of his rôle—weep, draw tears—or whether he should remain master of himself throughout the most impassioned and violent action on the part of the character which he represents. In a word, whether the actor should remain unmoved himself, the more surely to move others.¹ It is from within that the actor moves, the springs which make his character express the whole gamut of human consciousness; and all these springs which are his nerves, he must hold in his hand and play

¹ The best illustrations of the two schools we can think of are Bernhardt and Duse. Bernhardt belonged to the "inspirational" school; Duse to the school described by Coquelin.

upon as best he can. It is as unnecessary for the actor to be moved as it is for a pianist to be in the depths of despair to play the 'Funeral March' of Chopin or Beethoven aright. He knows it; he opens his instrument and your soul is harrowed. I would lay a heavy wager that if he should give way to any personal emotion he would play but ill. By analogy, an actor who regards his own emotions otherwise than as material is likely to fare badly. It is therefore in my opinion a mistake to trust to inspiration. Nothing is more likely to produce inspiration than good, hard preparatory work."

The Theory of Regnier

A professor named Regnier was Coquelin's teacher at the Conservatoire. From him we learn how this theory of conscious emotional expression in acting was applied to the actual reading of a rôle. In the incident quoted below, from Vandam's "A Gentleman in Paris," we find a definite timing of action and speech, a resort to musical phrasing that definitely illustrates the value for the actor of training in musical rhythm:

How it Worked in Practice

"In one of his (Regnier's) best known characters, that of an old servant in 'La Joie Fait Peur,' there is a scene which, as played by Regnier and Delaunay, looked to the spectator absolutely spontaneous. The smallest detail

had been minutely regulated. It is where the old retainer, while dusting the room, is talking to himself about the young master, Lieutenant Adrien Desaubiers, who is reported dead. 'I can see him now, as he used to come in from his long walks, tired, stamping and shouting before he was fairly in the house: "Here I am, my good Noel; I am dying with hunger. Quick! An omelette."' At that moment the young lieutenant enters the room, having heard Noel's last sentence and repeats it word for word. Short as was the sentence, it had been arranged that Delaunay should virtually cut it into four parts. At the words: 'It is I,' Regnier shivered from head to foot. At 'Here I am, my good Noel,' he lifted his eyes to heaven to make sure that the voice did not come from there and that he was not laboring under a kind of hallucination. At the words, 'I am dying of hunger,' he came to the conclusion that it was a real, human voice. And at the final, 'Quick! An omelette!' he turned round quickly and fell like a log into the young fellow's arms."

"Feelings Vary; Effects Should Never Vary"

"I repeat the whole of the scene had been timed to the fraction of a second; nevertheless on the first night Regnier, nervous as all good actors are on such occasions, forgot all about his own arrangements and at the first sound of Delaunay's voice, was so overcome with emotion that he literally tumbled against the latter who, of course,



A



B

A UNITY OF GESTURE; B CONTRAST OF GESTURE.

"A single person rising gently out of a group will produce a stronger impression than if the whole rose at the same moment; and the effect will be increased tenfold if, while he rises, those who remain seated bow themselves to the ground." (Chapter VI, part 2.)

was not prepared to bear him up and had all he could do to keep from falling himself. Meanwhile Regnier lay stretched at full length on the stage and the house broke into tempestuous applause. 'That was magnificent,' said Delaunay after the performance; 'suppose we repeat it tomorrow.' But Regnier would not hear of it. He stuck to his original conception in four tempi. He preferred trusting to his art rather than to the frank promptings of nature. That is why a lesson of Regnier to his pupils was so interesting to the outsider. The latter was initiated into all the resources the great actor has at his command wherewith to produce his illusion upon the public. Among Regnier's pupils those were his favorites who never allowed themselves to be carried away by their feelings and who trusted to these resources as indicated to them by their tutor. He was to a certain extent doubtful of the others. 'Feelings vary; effects intelligently conceived, studied and carried out ought never to vary.'"

Controlled Acting

Acting, then, is not the hit-or-miss inspirational performances that press-agents would have us believe. It is an art which depends upon the actor's ability "to remain unmoved himself, the more surely to move others"; upon a conscious direction of his forces—nerves, muscles, sensibilities—the medium through which he must express himself. If this be admitted, we must next

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decide how the actor can best develop and preserve this power of expressing controlled emotion.

Rhythmic Training for Actor and Director

In the foregoing chapters of this book we have shown the importance of rhythmic training in the education of children, in harmonizing the forces of the body and the mind, and in the training of the dancer. We have dwelt upon the value of such training in the development of temperament and character; releasing and consolidating the powers of self-expression and achieving through rhythm (the first impulse alike in the individual and the race) the maximum of force with the minimum of effort. The same general principles apply to the actor's art, and in addition a knowledge of musical rhythm and musical form will serve a definite and practical purpose in the expression of dramatic action both through movement or gesture and speech.

Music and Drama

Prophecy and accomplishment both point to music as the medium through which the actor is to develop his art, the dramatic action to be unified in its expression through "lines" and "business," and the audience and actor drawn together in their emotional response to the plot. In the following paragraphs we quote a prophecy, an experiment and an opinion, the first by a German (or one

who speaks for a German); the second by a Frenchman and the third by an Englishman, all of whom have contributed definitely to the new movement in the theatre.

A German Prophecy

Mr. Arthur Kahane, the literary director for Max Reinhardt, speaks of the new art of acting demanded by the close contact and intimacy which are the chief features of the new form of theatre in which footlights are eliminated:

“Through close contact with the spectator who, metaphorically speaking, can feel the warm breath of dramatic art, the actor will be compelled to draw from the well of his deepest experience . . . Of course this will come most easily to actors who possess a *musical temperament* for music is inherent in human beings and by music we may reach the heart of the vastest crowds.”

A French Experiment

In an article in *The Theatre Arts Magazine* for January, 1919, the author tells how Jacques Copeau, founder of the famous Theatre du Vieux Colombier in Paris, brought with his troupe to America a teacher of eurythmics.

“Rhythm as a dramatic force acts directly on the most fundamental emotions of mankind. . . . Continuous

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rhythmic motion is as different from mere gesture as poetry is from prose. . . . The thread of a rhythmic continuity may unite any group of actors for the realization of a dramatic piece.

“The Dalcroze teacher has been watching rehearsals with an eye to gesture and physical interpretation. She says that M. Copeau has disciplined himself so perfectly that he instinctively coordinates mind, emotion and gesture for the interpretation of a part. But often the actors try in vain to follow his direction. Though they may perfectly understand his idea, they have insufficient control of mind over body to translate this idea into synthesized motion. They can only imitate the visual gesture. Again a matter of physical inhibition may baffle the actor. The teacher tells how one man who was supposed to be listening acutely to a conversation on the other side of the stage insisted on bending *away* from the action instead of toward it, thereby breaking the unity of the scene. When told to lean the other way, he tried but could only do so awkwardly. Instinct told him to bend away and he had to obey. But though he listened ever so hard, he failed to convey the idea of listening. . . . In stage presentation Copeau tries to develop the action as a unified dramatic whole, rather than a series of incidents. He believes that the actors should do something more than imitate life and move gracefully about the stage. They should cooperate towards an effective

rendering of the dramatic theme in their bodies as well as in their words."

An English Opinion

In an address to the Dalcroze Society of Great Britain and Ireland, Granville Barker the famous English producer and playwright expressed the following opinion as to the value of rhythmic training for the actor:

"I think there are, so to speak, three circles of application of eurythmics to this particular study. First there is its relationship to the actual practice of acting. I have no doubt whatever that M. Jaques-Dalcroze's system is a very great benefit indeed to people who are studying the dramatic art. For while you can learn all the component parts of acting, acting itself you cannot learn. Actors, for lack of training in the fundamentals of their art, are always trying to run before they can walk. They begin their training by learning parts and studying plays. But what should be the foundations of the art of acting? One of them without doubt is to gain that perfect physical or emotional poise which eurythmics seems to give, that sense of rhythm in everything they do. Now to the second circle. It seems to me that the essentials of the art of acting are things which practically every single man or woman should study. They should be part of general education. There is a very great misconcep-

tion that the art of acting consists in pretending to be something that you are not. But what acting really consists in is expressing through the medium of your own personality something which you have spiritually and emotionally absorbed. And now the third and outermost circle. Is not this study of self-expression, of interpretation through the medium of one's personality, a necessary part of civilization itself? On the encouragement of the individual to develop himself to the highest pitch of self-expression, on that and on that only can we hopefully build a great democracy. That appears to me to be the great claim that eurhythmics has upon our attention as educators and learners ourselves. Its relation to the arts is in one sense incidental, but in a sense that the arts are but the expression of the spiritual vitality of the people,—the only sense I think in which it is profitable to consider them at all—the relation is fundamental."

A Summary

To summarize these opinions: (1) In the growing intimacy of the theatre where actor and audience are brought into more direct contact than ever before, that actor will be most successful whose musical temperament has been developed. (2) Unity of dramatic action in a group of players can best be achieved by rhythmic training which gives the natural expression of emotion through movement and eliminates the physical inhibitions which

make gesture belie the spoken word. (3) Training in eurythmics will give the actor physical and emotional poise and aid him in the expression of his personality and temperament.

Translation of Musical into Bodily Rhythms

In the brief space of this book it is impossible to set forth in detail the various ways in which the study of musical rhythms may be applied directly to the training of the actor. In "Rhythm, Music and Education" (Chapter XII, especially) M. Jaques-Dalcroze has set forth very clearly the relations between eurythmics and moving plastic; between sound rhythms and muscular rhythms; between movements in time and movements in space. He gives a table of the elements common to music and to movement, and explains at length his theory of gesture. A few of the latter theories are set forth in the second part of this chapter dealing with the movement of actor-groups but it has been necessary to omit a great deal. It is only necessary here to emphasize that rhythmic training is valuable for the actor, not only because of the physical and mental control it gives, not only because of its release of temperament through that control, but because in the principles of musical construction will be found a mine of material that may be directly applied to the expression of dramatic action in bodily movement and in the reading of lines.

Application of Musical Principles to Acting

Rhythm is the element common to all the arts and to all means of expression. There are not several kinds of rhythm—musical, bodily, spiritual, temperamental and so forth; there is but one rhythm and that, being an essential part of music, is best developed through music. Rhythm in music, in movement, in gesture, in speech—it is all the same rhythm. Its *impression* on the organism through music must inevitably lead to its natural *expression* in movement and speech. All of the elements that go to make up the form of music—notes, tempo, phrasing, counterpoint, syncopation, agogic and dynamic—are equally the elements of rhythm in movement and speech. In the anecdote about Regnier quoted above we see how the speech of Delaunay was broken into four measures, as it were, and how Regnier timed his movements in response to that speech so that they would fall on the first beat of each measure. There are thousands of illustrations which might be given of the application of the elements of musical construction to the building of a scene.

A Few Examples

If a character in a play, for instance, were required to cross the stage and at a certain point collide with another one, the exact point of collision might be determined by having one actor walk in quarter notes and the other in eighth notes. If this were done always in the same way,

the two would always collide at exactly the same point and, if their steps were regulated so that one performer's grew in intensity and speed (*accelerando* and *crescendo*) while the other's did just the opposite (*ritardando* and *diminuendo*), they would always collide with the same force. If the action were designed, as it probably would be, for comic effect, it would certainly be helpful if the actors knew just how they achieved the effect and how to reproduce it whenever necessary. Another example: A dialogue between two actors, the one of whom must interrupt the other at certain points, would gain immensely in strength if the actors first walked the rhythm of their respective speeches in counterpoint so that they would feel, nervously and muscularly, the opposition of the two rhythms. Another and final example: An actress must cross the stage and as she does so, express a growing tension of emotion that culminates at a given point. She might enter at a normal gait, take a few steps twice as quickly, then twice as quickly again and so on without covering more ground when taking six or eight times as many steps as when she entered. In the small space allotted to her she might thus, by her movements, express the emotional climax in such a way that she could at any time exactly repeat the effect.

Rhythmic Training Means Increased Power and Material

It would be possible to multiply instances indefinitely. We have only quoted these few, taking the simplest

musical elements, to show that the value of rhythmic training lies not only in the increased power of bodily expression but in the provision of an actual technique based on an understanding of the elements of music. The director of a group of actors would be able to draw from his company an undreamed-of response if his sense of rhythmic values in sound and movement had been developed. Instead of relying solely on his own powers of profanity and on his company's powers of imitation, he would be able to secure any dramatic effect because he would have at hand the materials out of which to fashion it. If, in addition, he were directing a group of actors similarly trained in musical rhythm, he would find himself on an artistic level with the orchestra leader who interprets through the complicated and seemingly unwieldy instrument made up of a hundred human organisms the single exalted inspiration of the composer. Their duties are the same: To express progressive emotion through sound and movement.

PART 2. THE GESTURE OF ACTOR-GROUPS

Group Action in Lyric Drama

The individuals composing a chorus, however gifted, will never produce a really dramatic effect so long as they act independently of one another. Forty persons each making a different gesture, fail to convey the impression

of a common emotion. Their gestures are lost in space. It is with the choric element as with music drama as a whole: each of its elements should be able to fuse with the others or temporarily withdraw from them as necessity dictates. The gesture of a crowd should be the result of a number of modifications, almost imperceptible, of a fixed attitude imposed on all its participants. In modern spoken drama, each individual member of a crowd can act independently and gesticulate according to his fancy to give the impression of, for example, a festival, a strike or a battle. But in lyric drama the crowd has an entirely different function. It must express the emotions of a whole community, to which end a very special process of training is necessary.

Functions of the Chorus

We have all of us admired, at gymnastic displays, the wonderful living pictures formed by hundreds of young men moving in step to music. The synchronism of their gestures produces a sensation at once emotional and æsthetic, and yet these gymnasts are quite unconscious of creating an artistic effect. Their sole aims are discipline and hygiene. They cultivate movement for its own sake and give no thought to it as a medium for the expression of emotion. On the stage in lyric drama the crowd of supers also cultivates collective gesture but in the interests of ideas. It sustains a double rôle, not only support-

ing the dramatic action but in addition (as in the plays of Æschylus) communicating the thoughts of the poet or expressing the emotions of the spectators, thereby forming an intermediary between the stage and auditorium. When it plays an active part in the drama, its movements constitute gestures of action. When it bears the rôle of confidant of the hero or of mouthpiece of the religious or philosophic truths contained in the play, its gesture partakes of the nature of music.

Unity of Gesture

The collective gesture of action may consist simply of a repetition by each member of the chorus of an individual movement prepared in advance or even in the merging of a number of individual gestures independent of each other. But where a musical gesture has to be made with the object of indicating a situation or creating an atmosphere, these individual gestures must be unified, each member of the chorus discarding his personality to subordinate himself to the whole. In other words, the producer must orchestrate the diverse movements of the actors in such a way as to obtain a unity of collective gesture. Before studying the laws by which this orchestration may be effected simply, clearly and naturally, yet in such a way that these skillfully contrived collective movements retain an essentially human character, we

must first understand the laws which establish the harmony of individual gestures.

Collective Gesture

The crowd must be considered by the producer as an entity, a single individual with many limbs. Fifty persons slowly raising their arms will only produce the effect of a single strong line. In order to convey the impression of a whole people raising its arms, the gesture of each isolated actor should carry on the gesture commenced by his neighbor and transmit it to a third, in pursuance of a continuous movement. Similarly where it is desired to manifest an impetuous tendency, a single step forward taken by each member of the chorus will by no means suggest the advance of a whole crowd. To accomplish this the rear members must remain stationary, other members taking a slight step, others again a longer and yet others more than one step forward in such a way that the whole space is occupied and, in consequence, the group is extended.

Intensity of Effect through Contrast

It is the same with dynamic gesture. The impression of a common release of energy does not depend on the amount of muscular effort contributed by each individual member. An effect of crescendo could be obtained without any increase of energy on the part of individuals by a simple shrinkage of the group analogous to that of the

contraction of a muscle, or on the other hand, an extension which will cause it to occupy a larger area. Generally speaking, dynamic effects are obtained only by modifications of space and emotive effects are obtained by interruptions of continuous symmetrical formations. A single person rising gently out of a kneeling group will produce a stronger impression than if the whole rose at the same moment. The effect will be increased tenfold if while he rises those who remain kneeling bow themselves to the ground. Just as every gesture of the arm attains its maximum significance by the opposition of another limb, so a collective gesture should be set off by careful contrived contrasted gesture. An advancing body will convey a far stronger impression of its forward direction if simultaneously other bodies are seen retiring.

Individual Actor and the Crowd

Thus polyrhythm ought to play a highly important part in the training of stage crowds; not alone polyrhythm as applied to the chorus but that formed by counterpoint between the gestures of the individual actor and those of the crowd, opposing continuous slow movement to lively and irregular movement, linking in canon gestures and steps, producing all manner of variations of attitude. The study of the relations between stage gestures and space demonstrates the need of dispensing with painted representations of artificial dimensions in favor of real

inclines and staircases which permit the body to vary its attitudes in pursuit of balance.

Rhythmic Training of the Chorus

But it is not enough to have provided actors with material conditions more suitable for bodily movement. The essential is to give them the special education required for the utilization of such conditions. This education must adjust the relations between space and time; hence it will be essentially musical for music is the only art that teaches time-nuance. The chorus must reproduce the elementary rhythm of music; it must give form and a framework to the individual actions of the protagonists. In an orchestral ensemble, full freedom is allowed the individual musicians in interpreting the dominant motives of the work, but their lyric expansion is continually restrained and toned down by the necessity of respecting the general form and of preserving the balance of the interpretation as a whole. As we have said, it is the chorus that creates the atmosphere in which the individual artists perform; the latter must obviously be permitted freedom of individual action, but only so long as they keep within the limits imposed by the æsthetic and emotional atmosphere of the piece. For the rest, each individual whether in the chorus or outside it, must sacrifice his particular idiosyncracies of expression in the interests of the general impression; the crowd retaining

its special function of pointing the similarity and contrasts between the imaginary lives of the *dramatis personæ* and the ordinary lives and rhythm of the spectators.

The special training for choruses proposed by Adolphe Appia twenty years ago and since practised by us aims¹ at giving performers the necessary flexibility for adapting themselves spontaneously to all the rhythms, however complex, called into play by the inspiration and what we may be permitted to call the "music" of the creative imagination. This education should be imposed likewise on conductors, producers and specialists in stage painting and lighting, whose efforts should combine to produce an impression of unity, for they can remain independent and isolated only at serious risk to the work as a whole.

PART 3. The SINGER

Opera Singers

If we visit any of our principal opera houses and study the play of the performers, while listening to the orchestra, we perceive at once that there exists a barrier between the orchestra and the stage, and that the orchestral music acts as a mere accompaniment to the song or to the attitude of the actors and does not really enter into them and inspire their movements. The music rises, swells, breaks out in grandiose resonance. The gesture either does not follow the crescendo or does not convey it to the spectator.

¹ That is, in the Institut Jaques-Dalcroze.

The music subsides, dies away, whispers and murmurs as in a dream. The attitude on the stage reveals a muscular tension which is fortissimo! Even musical rhythms that characterize not soul-movements but simple motions of the body, such as walking, or running, or sudden arrests or starts, are not realized on the stage, or are realized incorrectly which is worse.

The Non-Rhythmic Singer

Certainly there exist opera singers who feel the necessity of a union of gesture and music, and who endeavor to express rhythms of sound by muscular rhythms. But they do not succeed for want of a special training, as necessary to this end as is a special finger training to enable a musician to express himself through the medium of an instrument. Not every musician requires to express music in movement, but it is obvious that an opera singer to be a complete artist must possess this faculty of "realizing" rhythms plastically. Unfortunately if his education is incomplete, that of his public is more so. That is why so many non-rhythmic singers attain success in spite of this deficiency. It will not always be so. A new point of view is already in course of evolution. The study of the relation between time and space is engaging the attention of numerous æstheticians and the time is not far distant when lack of rhythm will be counted as serious a flaw in a singer's equipment as tonal inaccuracy.

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Union of Words, Movement and Music

To unite word, gesture and music it is not enough that the music should be intimately allied to the word, nor that the word and gesture should correspond. It is necessary in addition that physical movements and sound movements, the musical and the plastic elements, should be coordinated. If we now examine either the words or the productions of the modern opera house, we shall find ourselves forced to admit that this last union has not yet been effected.

Just as verbal expression, the poetic interpretation of the text, demands precise and definite gestures, so musical expression, constituting the atmosphere of the piece, exacts of the actor a similar and absolute physical submission to the rhythm that produces it. Every movement of musical rhythm should evoke in the body of the interpreter a corresponding muscular movement¹; every mood

¹ "At a crowded concert this evening, I found a seat at the back of the orchestra and when a singer came on to sing the *Agnus Dei* of Bach's Mass in B Minor I had the full view of her back. Her dress was cut low and plainly showed her shoulder blades. Thus I saw that though the movements of her arms were slight, yet as she sang the long drawn-out sighs, rising and falling, of the *Miserere*, the subdued loveliness of the music was accompanied by an unceasing play of the deltoid and trapezius muscles. It was a perpetual dance of all the visible muscles, in swelling and sinking curves, opening out and closing, rising and falling and swaying, a beautifully *expressive rhythm in embodiment of the melody*. . . . Rightly considered, the whole body is a dance. It is forever in instinctive harmonious movement, at every point exalted to unstained beauty because at every movement it is the outcome of vital expression that springs from its core and is related to the meaning of the whole." Havelock Ellis in *Impressions and Comments*.



"PLASTIC LANGUAGE HAS AS MANY AND AS VARIED RESOURCES AS MUSIC."

Crescendo and diminuendo represented by a group. Both the line and the intensity of the gesture suggest the musical equivalent < >.

expressed in sound should determine on the stage an appropriate attitude; every orchestral nuance, every crescendo, diminuendo, stringendo or rallentando should be impressed on the interpreter and expressed by him as occasion demands. Naturally as the purpose of the text does not require an appropriate gesture to each word, so not every musical rhythm calls for its physical interpretation. It is however essential that it should produce a mental attitude, that it should develop in the mind of the interpreter a particular image that shall animate his whole organism if we really wish to see the ideal unity effected—if we wish to bring music into the heart of life.

Coordination of Movements

It would appear to be easy to train artists according to these indications; but this is not the case. The clearest comprehension by the actors of these directions by no means assures their execution. To make with apparent ease a step in advance of a particular note, he must have gone through a whole series of exercises in advancing and halting, aiming at the acquirement of the various kinds of balance of the body, pose of the feet and muscular innervation of the legs necessary to interpret the different sound tempi in all their shades. The gait of the actor must accord with the musical movement and the rhythm of his steps must fall quite naturally into the rhythm of the sounds. Nor would he be able to change his attitude in a

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given time without having studied plastic anacrusis—that is, the laws of preparation of movements. He must next practise movements of the arm in all degrees of rapidity and energy, first simultaneously, one arm for example making an angular, the other a circular movement. In this form of exercise, movements of apparent simplicity prove exceedingly difficult to execute. To raise one arm in sixteen beats of an adagio while half lowering the other in the same space of time requires a perfect acquaintance with every shade of muscular innervation, and, in addition, considerable practice before this double action will convey the impression of naturalness and ease. To one practised in the correlating of movements in time and space, the sight of a gesture completed before or after the beat of a musical rhythm produces a positive æsthetic pain. It is not until the arms are capable of being moved with complete freedom that their movements can be combined with leg movements. The factor coordinating arm and leg movements is respiration.

Breathing an Aid to Plastic Expression

Singers confine their use of the diaphragm to the production of the necessary breath for the larynx and yet breathing is not only an invaluable medium of physical balance, but in addition a highly powerful agent of dramatic expression. Apart from the rapid movements of costal respiration by which our lyric artists so frequently express

their emotion in love scenes, there exists a whole host of other movements of the torso, produced by the breath, complementary to the movements of arms, legs and head. The latter should also be submitted to special exercises, all the more so since vocal exercises by no means encourage suppleness in the neck.

Movement Controlled by Sensibility

But the mastery of body movements constitutes a mere virtuosity unless those movements are employed to help out facial expression. The same gesture may express ten different sentiments according as the eye gives the clue. The correlating of body movements with facial play must then also be made the subject of a special training; but this should not be undertaken until repeated exercises have brought music into direct communication with the organism—vibrations of sound evoking analagous vibrations in the tissues and the nervous system which the body, susceptible of musical emotion, has learned to transform into plastic emotions and to realize æsthetically. The mechanism of the body is nothing until it has become subservient to the sensibilities, the development of which a diligent study of the translation of musical rhythms into physical movements is almost certain to promote.

Harmonizing Movement

Gesture must define musical emotion and call up its image. To that end we must educate our bodies in

rhythm and by rhythm. It is not necessary that we should be perfectly formed. We must vocalize our movements and establish a communion between them and music. The essential is that our movements should be harmonized and that our habitual motions should be refined,—in short, that we should be artists. We have all of us muscles, reason, and volition, consequently we are all equal before rhythm.

PART 4. NOTES ON STAGE PRODUCTION AND LIGHTING

Performances at Hellerau

Several interesting experiments in stage production have been conducted under the direction of M. Jaques-Dalcroze. One of the earliest experiments in a new form of playhouse was made in the Dalcroze School at Hellerau, near Dresden, before the war—a playhouse in which there was no division between performers and spectators, in which there was no scenery in the conventional sense of the term and in which the lighting effects were radically opposed to “footlights and spots.”

Arrangement and Lighting

In “The Theatre of Tomorrow” Kenneth Macgowan gives the following account of the experiments in production conducted by M. Jaques-Dalcroze:

“In the great hall of the group of handsome buildings where Jaques-Dalcroze taught his new system of musical and bodily education through movement, curious and

revolutionary experiments took place. . . . The hall combined both stage and auditorium in a single oblong room. Whatever served as stage and setting was placed at one end. The other end of the room was occupied by the banked seats of the audience. Except for the open space of shining floor there was no division between the spectators and the stage, not even the division of lighting. Both the audience and the setting were illumined by the same lambent and mysterious glow proceeding from the translucent walls around, behind and above them. These walls were of something resembling balloon silk, covered with cedar oil. Behind this surface were batteries of some ten thousand bulbs arranged and circuited so as to permit all manner of shades and gradations of light. . . . The stage and the scene were identical and consisted merely of a complex of movable platforms and steps, supplemented by simple flats and hangings. These could be rearranged almost endlessly.”¹

¹ “Adolph Appia first gave me the idea of evolutions on a staircase and the Russian painter, Salzmann, designed for my exercises a highly ingenious set of units whereby a whole series of practicable staircases could easily and speedily be constructed. Distinguished producers, such as Reinhardt, Granville Barker and Gemier, came later to adopt our methods but only Gemier appears to me to have utilized them to really vital effect. Nowadays one sees staircases on all stages but the producers do not know what to do with them nor can the actors either perform or repose on them with ease. Appia wrote: ‘Stairs by their straight lines and breaks maintain the necessary contrast between the curves of the body and the sinuous lines of its evolutions; their practical uses offer at the same time distinct facilities of expression.’”—Jaques-Dalcroze.

Rhythmic Performances

M. Jaques-Dalcroze also gives the following account of performances given with large groups of people:

"I may be pardoned for mentioning, as a matter of record, my Festival Vaudois of 1903 at Lausanne, in which a chorus of eighteen hundred persons were directed by Gemier according to my theories. At the Festspiele of my school at Hellerau I presented Orpheus and other plays. In the former I achieved an interesting polyrhythm of crowds on staircases and inclines. Later in the performances of the Fete de Juin in 1914 at Geneva, two hundred rhythmic students took part, interpreting the lyric part of my work and giving plastic expression to the orchestral and choral symphony on a flat surface, tiers and monumental staircases. The dramatic scenes were directed by Gemier."

Stage Lighting

The theories of M. Jaques-Dalcroze on the unlimited possibilities of stage lighting are set forth in the following quotation:

"Stage lighting does not generally attempt more than a picturesque imitation of the effects of nature, hardly venturing outside the scope of scenic decoration. Its action, allied with music, would create new and varied possibilities of expression. Discarding its habitual function of representing the various shades of day and night, it might participate directly in the dramatic action,

accentuating sudden changes of feeling, whether impulses or reactions, permeating the decorative space with its emotive qualities. We might thus be shown a crowd at first enveloped in relative darkness entering little by little into a zone of light, different elements of the crowd disporting themselves in variously lighted parts of the stage until the collective gesture begun in twilight emerges into the triumphal light of day.

Light and Music

“Light is the sister of music. To reinforce the crescendo of the one by strengthening the other, to harmonize all their qualities of shading, phrasing, and rhythm would be to convey to an audience by a combination of sound and light a maximum of æsthetic sensation and to furnish actors with undreamed facilities of expression, provided naturally that actors should not come to use these new methods mechanically, that they should remain real artists. For art is not a particular method of expressing or transcribing life. It is ‘life itself and the means of experiencing it.’ The development of sentiment and temperament does not unfortunately enter into any actual curriculum of artistic education. That is a grave mistake and it seems incredible that so few artists and critics should recognize it. So far as we are concerned, if we earnestly desire these reforms it is because, to vary the maxim of La Rochefoucauld, ‘we know perfectly what we want.’”

CHAPTER VII

RHYTHMIC TRAINING FOR THE MUSICIAN

PART I. THE STUDENT AND TEACHER OF MUSIC

Rhythm before Technique

A musical education should encourage the free development and progress of rhythm. Every increase in this faculty will provide new avenues of expression and contribute to the enrichment of music as a whole. Our chief concern is that musicians trained in the methods of yesterday should devote themselves to the study of those for tomorrow. Not until then will pianoforte masters realize the beneficial influence of education by and in rhythm on the study of instrumental technique, and teachers of composition appreciate the necessity of ever more closely co-ordinating sound and movement, ear, feeling and temperament.

The Complete Education in Music

I contend that an amateur should learn music before he touches the piano. The average student of today spends

years practising scales so that he may play Liszt's second Rhapsody, which a pianola, without any practice, can play far better. He devotes perhaps a dozen years of his life to studying the piano without giving a moment's thought to music; without knowing anything of the great composers and their styles; without being able to express his own thoughts in a few simple improvised chords; without knowing how to accompany or transpose, or to play chamber music; without even being able to provide dance music for his friends; without giving his parents a little of the enjoyment and satisfaction to which they are entitled. These results convince me that I am right in advocating a reform of our system of teaching music. This reform is simple and practicable. It applies not only to the piano but to every instrument, and to the voice. It consists in including in the musical training of children practical exercises for the development of the ear and the taste; for awakening the individuality of the pupil; for arousing the sense of beauty by acquainting the student with the styles of the classical masters and teaching them to compare and analyze them; for furnishing them with the means of reading easily fairly difficult pieces without mistakes and of interpreting them with feeling but without hysteria; with rhythm but without show. By this means we may produce a race of music-lovers—amateurs in the best sense of the word—who will attend concerts out of a yearning for beauty rather than out of snobbishness; who will appreci-

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ate the works they hear because they are familiar with the structure of such compositions and can analyze their content.

Awakening the Consciousness of Rhythm

Style in music varies according to climate and by corollary according as temperaments are influenced and modified by social atmosphere and conditions of life. The diversities of harmony and movement which characterize the music of different peoples spring from the nervous and muscular state of their organisms and have nothing to do with the diversity in their hearing faculties. Should we not therefore in teaching music devote more attention to the motor faculties of the pupils, to that ensemble of reactions, impulses, pauses, recoils and movements, whether spontaneous or deliberate, that constitute temperament? Not only should the ear and voice of a child receive adequate training, but every part of his body which contributes to rhythmic movement, every muscular and nervous element that vibrates, contracts and relaxes under the pressure of natural impulses. Should it not be possible to create new reflexes, to undertake a systematic education of nerve-centers, to subdue the activities of too-excitable temperaments, to regulate and harmonize muscular activities and conflicts, to establish more direct communications between the feeling and understanding, between sensations which inform the mind and those

which re-create sensorial means of expression? Every thought is the interpretation of an action. If, up to the present, muscular movements of hands and fingers alone have sufficed to create in the spirit a distinct consciousness of rhythm, what far more intense impressions might we not convey were we to make use of the whole organism in producing the effects necessary for the evocation of the motor-tactile consciousness?

Eurythmics

Confining myself to my rôle of musical pedagogue, I cannot exaggerate the tremendous part played by rhythm in the formation of musical individuality. In the following paragraphs I shall describe the nature and the scope of my system of rhythmic training, which I have called Eurythmics, in its application to the teaching of music.

Its Aim

The aim of eurythmics is to enable pupils at the end of their course to say, not "I know," but "I have experienced." This experience creates in them the desire to express themselves, because the deep *impression* of an emotion inspires a longing to communicate it to the extent of one's powers to others. The whole method is based on the principle that theory should *follow* practice; that children should not be taught rules until they have had

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experience of the facts which have given rise to them; that the first thing to be taught a child is the use of all his faculties. Only subsequently should he be made acquainted with the opinions and deductions of others. In respect to music, especially, the present practice is to put an instrument in the hands of children who have no idea what to do with it. We have frequently deplored the fact that they are taught to play the piano before they have shown any musical propensities, before they can hear sounds or appreciate rhythms; before their feeling for sounds and rhythmic movement is developed—before their whole beings vibrate in response to the emotions aroused by music.

Rhythm, Solfege and Improvisation

I shall briefly explain the purpose of my exercises in rhythmic movement and their relation to the subjects of elementary musical training next in order of importance: namely the exercises for developing the hearing faculties (solfege) and those for training the pupil in spontaneous creation (improvisation).

Rhythmic Movement

The study of rhythm awakens a feeling for bodily rhythm and the aural perception of rhythm. This feeling for bodily rhythm is developed in several ways: (1) by

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means of a special training of the muscular system and nerve centers; (2) by the development of the capacity for perceiving and expressing gradations of force and elasticity in time and space; (3) by training in the analysis of rhythmic movements and in their spontaneous execution; (4) by teaching pupils to read, mark and finally create rhythm both mentally and physically.¹

Ear-Training

The aural perception of rhythm is developed by means of a special system of ear-training. The pupil is taught to perceive and express gradations of force and time, duration of sounds. He is trained to analyze sounds and to give them spontaneous expression vocally. He learns to appreciate sounds both spontaneously and deliberately. Finally he learns to read, mark and create sound rhythms both mentally and physically. This training of the ear awakens the sense of pitch and tone relations and the faculty of distinguishing tone qualities. It teaches the pupil to hear and to reproduce mentally melodies in all keys and every kind and combination of harmony; to read and improvise vocally; to write down the rhythms he hears

¹ In eurythmics, to create a rhythm physically is to "realize" in movement all the elements of which it is made up: Tempo, note values, phrasing, shading, etc. This is done as definitely as it is by the symbols printed on a page of music—so definitely that another pupil, watching this creation of a rhythm, is able to set down in conventional form what has been expressed in bodily movement.

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and use them as material in constructing music for himself.

Improvisation

The study of pianoforte improvisation combines the principles of rhythm and solfege and expresses them by means of touch. It awakens the motor-tactile consciousness and teaches pupils to interpret on the piano musical thoughts of a melodic, harmonic and rhythmic nature.

Natural Sequence of these Studies

The pupil begins the study of solfege only after a year's rhythmic training. He continues the exercises in rhythmic movement and learns to adapt them to the needs of voice and ear. All of these exercises in solfege will correspond number for number with those in rhythmic movement. As he learns to distinguish keys he may commence the study of harmony. Control of the progressions is assured by his feeling for movement; his faculties of concentration, hearing and listening and his sense of muscular form regulating the accuracy of the voice. Before transcribing successions of chords, he will feel them resonate within him. Appreciating the connection between melody and movement, there will remain the coordination of movement, melody and harmony. He will then be in a position to undertake the study of piano-

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forte improvisation,—that is, rapid and spontaneous instrumental composition.

Rhythmic before Technical Training

To sum up: Music is composed of sound and movement. Sound is a form of movement of a secondary order; rhythm of a primary. Musical studies should therefore be preceded by exercises in movement. Every limb, first separately, then simultaneously and finally the whole body—should be set in rhythmic motion. The pupil who acquires a perfect confidence in his consciousness of rhythm and sound; who commands a rich experience of form of movement and a perfect mastery of a well-trained muscular system, may henceforth devote his whole attention to his instrument. Practising will then be found a delight instead of a torment.

PART 2. THE MUSICIAN: COMPOSER OR INTERPRETER¹

The Complete Musician

To be a complete musician, one requires a good ear, imagination, intelligence and temperament—that is, the faculty of experiencing and communicating artistic emotion. As regards the hearing, we cannot do better

¹ In *Rhythm, Music and Education* will be found two chapters of particular interest to the musician: Chapter VII, Eurythmics and Musical Composition and Chapter IX, Rhythm and Creative Imagination. This section of the present volume deals only with the effect of rhythm upon temperament.

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than adopt Lionel Dauriac's definition: that a musical ear is a faculty of the soul. Certainly the mere recognition and apprehension of sounds do not entitle a person to claim the possession of a good musical ear. Aural sensations should, in addition create an internal consciousness and state of emotion. There are musicians of marvellously trained ear who do not love and respond emotionally to music. Others, imperfectly developed aurally, are real artists capable both of interpreting and creating. But aural sensations require to be completed by muscular sensations, a physiological phenomena produced by the pervading influence of sound vibrations.¹ There are persons, deaf from birth, who can yet appreciate and distinguish pieces of music of different styles by means of sensations of a tactile nature, by the kinds of internal resonance which, according to the rhythms of music, vary in intensity and form.

Rhythm in Music.

Music is a combination of rhythm and sound. Since Beethoven, our musicians have sought progress only in harmony and tone, and have lost the mastery of sound-movements in which the great Flemish composers and John Sebastian Bach excelled. The ear is capable of appreciating not only variety of tone-quality, nuances of intensity and difference of pitch, but also the infinite

¹ See note Chapter III, page 50.

variety of time-values and duration. Primitive peoples manifest with regard to polyrhythm far more ingenuity and originality than ourselves. Would it not be worth a musician's while to devote as much care to the study of agogics and dynamics as to that of melody and harmony? I maintain that no true musician, entering a hall of machinery in full movement, could fail to be captivated by the whirr of the fabulous symphony produced by the magic of combined and dissociated rhythms, and to be tempted inevitably to extract the secrets of this moving and quivering life that animates nature, man and the work of man.

Opposition of Sound to Silence

We can judge of a work of architecture only in relation to the space in which it is constructed. Similarly musical rhythms can be appreciated only in relation to the atmosphere and space in which they move. In other words, musical rhythm can be appreciated only in relation to silence and immobility. Study the conditions of silence and you at once create the necessity, from the human as from the æsthetic point of view, of furnishing it with its natural counterpoise, sound. In breaking silence, sound sets in relief its enormous recuperative and consequently emotional capacities.¹ Musical rhythmic is the art of establishing due proportion between sound and movement,

¹ This is a natural law. The beating of the heart, for instance, can continue throughout our lifetime because its period of rest is longer than its period of activity.

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and static silence; of opposing them, and of preparing for the one by means of the other according to the laws of contrast and balance on which all style depends.

Architecture of Rhythm

A rest in music is simply an interruption of the sound or a transference into the region of *internal* hearing of phenomena of *external* hearing. Unfortunately the ambition of most of our musicians today would seem to be to annihilate silence in sound. A regeneration of the art of music will largely depend on the place our future geniuses will assign to "rests" in the architecture of rhythm. Few musicians realize the possibilities of infinite variety in time-durations. An inexhaustible source of new emotions will enrich the art of musical expression once its scope (at present limited to the employment of harmonic, contrapuntal and orchestral nuances) is extended to include all the new emotional resources contributed by nuances of sound-duration.

Development of Sensibility through Rhythm

Sensibility is closely allied to sensation. To be a sensitive musician it is necessary to appreciate the gradations, not only of pitch, but of the dynamic energy and the varying rapidity of movements. These gradations must be appreciated, not only by the ear, but also by the muscular sense. The study of rhythm helps to develop

A



B



"EURYTHMICS IS THE USE OF THE BODY AS A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT."

Anacrusis represented in movement: a. Preparation of movement for b. The accented beat.

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not only the instinct for time, symmetry and balance but also, thanks to the training of the nervous system involved, the sensibilities. However gifted a child may be in respect of his aural faculties, he will only become a good musician if he possesses temperament.

Rhythm Awakens and Develops Musical Temperament

Temperament can be awakened and developed, notwithstanding the theory of the "born musician," according to which no amount of musical study can have any influence on sensibility. Those who hold this theory maintain that training in rhythmic movement can be of no direct service to the art of music for on the one hand, it has nothing to teach the born musician; and on the other, a person not born a musician can never be made one. This theory will not hold water. Eurythmics reveals to the born musician a host of subconscious resources which he could otherwise acquire only by dint of long years of laborious and repeated personal researches and experiments. On the other hand, eurythmics alone, among all systems of musical education, is capable of awakening dormant or moribund temperament; of provoking in the organism the conflicts necessary for establishing the control and balance of resistances; and of bringing to consciousness by the harmonization of mental and muscular forces and the direction of nervous forces undreamed-of sources of creative and artistic vitality. //

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Rhythm Provides Composer with Material

Education by and in rhythm is in effect no more than a comparison and development of the ideas that are everywhere in the air. The unequal beats unconsciously employed by a few of our musicians are in constant use in the East. The whole art of musical expression may be enriched by the new sensibility resulting from the acquisition of a sense of time-duration and all its nuances. In seeking to initiate composers of tomorrow into the logic of unequal bars, unequal beats, three times as fast, and other rhythmical devices, our intention is by no means to influence them to compose in a new style, but merely to assure a greater scope for the expression of their genuine emotional impulses. Admittedly our illustrations are for the most part examples of irregular form; but on the one hand irregularity as an exceptional device will serve to throw regularity into relief; and on the other hand, a succession of irregularities constitutes in effect a new form of regularity. The alternation of styles is a powerful means of musical expression since, in music more than in any other art, contrast plays an active part in the structure.

Freeing the Composer from Metrical Rules

The composer who is obliged to bend his inspiration to the inflexible laws of symmetry in time-lengths comes gradually to modify his instinctive rhythms with a view to unity of measure and ends by conceiving only rhythms

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of a conventional time-pattern. In the folk-song the rhythm responds spontaneously and naturally to the emotion that has inspired it, and is not fettered by any metrical rules. Not only do unequal bars succeed each other in flexible and harmonious alternation, but the principle of irregularity of beats is audaciously asserted in defiance of hallowed laws. All music inspired by folk-tunes rings rhythmic and spontaneous, and the irresistible impulse of Russian music and of the modern French school is due to their instinctive return to the natural rhythms of folk lore. But once this return is premeditated, the rhythms lose their sincerity and vital qualities, for we must never forget rhythm is a non-reasoning principle originating in elementary vital emotions. Only the cultivation of primitive instincts, a "clean sweep" of our present selves, a re-training of the nervous system can give our motor organs the faculties of elasticity, resilience and relaxation, the free play of which will give rhythm to the expression of our emotional being.

Contrast in Art

All art is based on contrast. An *accelerando* or *ritardando* attains vitality only by contrast with the normal tempo. Gradations of time exercise an irresistible and inevitable influence both on melody and harmony, and the development of the latter will depend, not only on the extent to which musicians of the future concern them-

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selves with agogic and dynamic variations, but also on the direct influence of human emotions on durations of sounds, of beats and bars—on the reciprocal relations of these and on their contrasts with the higher and inexorable serenity of silence.

Variety the Essence of Art

Music is composed, in Schumann's phrase, with our heart's blood. Why be content with such pedantic circulation of that blood? The circulation depends on our nervous system, on our general and particular emotional state or temperament, that modifies from day to day the circumstances of our life, the acuteness of our desires, our prejudices, our revolts, our appeasements, and our submissions. Is not variety the essence of art? And may not variety exist in time-values and their infinite degrees as well as in harmony and tone-color? It may be objected that a poet may remain perfectly natural while conforming to the classical exigencies of lyric expression. Granted. But in poetry it is a question of arranging words rhythmically to express pre-existent thoughts, whereas in music it is the rhythm itself, produced by emotion, that most commonly gives birth and form to the melodic idea.

The Reincarnation of Music

Rhythm is the live essence of feeling. Rhythm and meter are the bases of all art. The musical education of

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the future will no longer confine itself to the laws of syntax and vocabularies, but will comprise the development of the means of spontaneous expression. It will teach the art of combining and harmonizing these means of expression by the process of elimination and selection known as style. Music must become once more a living language, a vital manifestation of thoughts and emotions.

APPENDIX ¹

LIST OF PRIVATE AND SPECIAL SCHOOLS IN THE UNITED STATES WHERE DALCROZE EURYTHMICS IS TAUGHT

Private Schools and Colleges

Laurel School, Cleveland, Ohio.
Francis W. Parker School, Chicago, Ill.
State Normal School, West Chester, Pa. (Summer Session.)
Hawthorne School, Glencoe, Ill.
The Phœbe Anna Thorne Model School of Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, Pa.
The Baldwin School, Bryn Mawr, Pa.
Miss Hyde's School, New York City.
Abington Friends' School, Jenkintown, Pa.
Kindergarten Teachers' Association, New York City.
Hunter College, New York City.
Haskell School, Cambridge, Mass.

Special Schools

Cornish School of Music, Seattle, Wash.
New York Institute for the Education of the Blind, New York City.

¹ This list, compiled by the New York School of Dalcroze Eurythmics in the summer of 1924, naturally changes from season to season as new schools are added and perhaps one or two dropped.

Boston School of Public Speaking, Boston, Mass. (and
the summer session at Gloucester, Mass.).
The Grace Hickox Studio of Dramatic Art, Chicago, Ill.
The Cleveland Institute of Music, Cleveland, Ohio.
Master School of United Arts, New York City.
The Laboratory Theatre, New York City.
Drama Institute, Inter-Theatre Arts, New York City.
Denishawn (School of the Dance), New York City.
Alviene University School, New York City. (School of
the theatre and dance.)
Hawley School of Development, Stamford, Conn.
Institute of Musical Art of the City of New York.
New York School of Dalcroze Eurythmics.
Boston School of Dalcroze Eurythmics.
Adolph Bolm School of the Dance, Chicago, Ill.
The Bird Larson School of Dancing.
Music Box Summer School, Cummington, Mass.

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